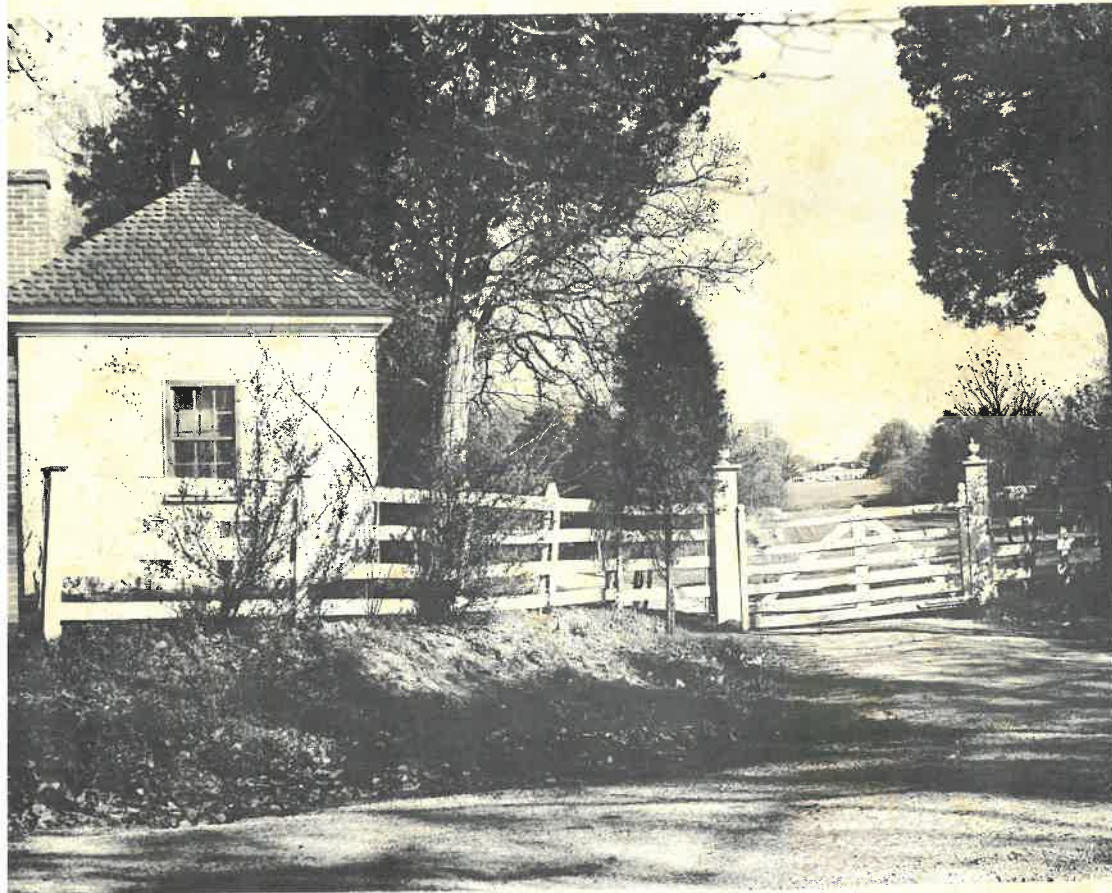


**Historical Society
of
Fairfax County, Virginia, Inc.**

Vol. 9 – 1964-1965



—(Picture courtesy Mount Vernon Ladies Association)

Through the West Gate of Mount Vernon

Historical Society
of
Fairfax County, Virginia, Inc.

Vol. 9 – 1964-1965

EDITORS

A. SMITH BOWMAN, JR.

KATHERINE S. SHANDS

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FRONT COVER: "West Gate," where all roads to Mount Vernon converged when General and Mrs. Washington lived here. Through it they passed when they journeyed overland to Alexandria, Georgetown, Williamsburg, or on their way to church at Pohick, or to visit their friends and neighbors, the Masons at Gunston Hall, the Fairfaxes at Belvoir and others.

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BACK COVER: Washington's sixteen-sided barn, built on Dogue Run Farm about two miles south of the Mansion. It survived until after the Civil War.



CHARLES CECIL WALL
President of the Historical Society of
Fairfax County, Va., Oct. 1962-Nov. 1964

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mrs. Bernice Carter Davis, a longtime resident on what was once George Washington's River Farm, has conferred an obligation on the Society whose imprint this publication bears, on her neighbors and on the student of local history by bringing together the sketches which follow. We are all indebted also to those who have collaborated with her. Mount Vernon is nationally known; its history has been told and retold. Its historical associations have overshadowed and obscured the homes of those who joined with the Washingtons in giving color, purpose and direction to the life of the community. In this post-war period, suburban growth has overrun many of these lesser known places like a tidal wave, deepening the shadow and increasing the threat of oblivion. Much of the information published here is available only in an incidental way in published sources which are scattered and long out of print; much of it is known only to the writers and would soon have been forgotten.

This Society acknowledges its indebtedness to Mrs. Davis and her associates for their timely contribution to one of its major objectives.

Charles C. Wall, President,
Historical Society of Fairfax County.

Mount Vernon
September 7, 1964

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are deeply indebted to the people who have contributed the articles in this book, not only for the writing, but for the many hours spent in searching out and verifying the facts set forth. They have been diligent and cooperative. To Aletha Agee, for stepping out of her usual dancing role to type and re-type endless pages of manuscripts, we are forever grateful.

Especially are we indebted to Mr. Charles Cecil Wall, Director of Mount Vernon, for reading the manuscripts and offering suggestions. Without his encouragement and help, we would not have undertaken this project.

Last, but not least, we express our personal gratitude to the Historical Society of Fairfax County for the privilege of organizing this report; for its publication and especially for making it available to those who have their homes on property that was once part of General Washington's Mount Vernon estate and who wish to know more of its colorful past.

Bernice Carter Davis
Mount Vernon, Virginia

September, 1964



A. SMITH BOWMAN, JR.
President of the Historical Society of
Fairfax County, Virginia, Nov. 1964—

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Out of Wilderness and Marshes Mount Vernon Evolved

By Bernice Carter Davis

In June, 1608, little more than one year after the first colonists landed at Jamestown, Captain John Smith sailed up the Potomac with fourteen men in an open boat as far as the rapids above the present site of Georgetown. He made a number of stops along the way and had contact with certain Indian tribes, including the Dogues who lived in the area which is now Mount Vernon. On this voyage Smith charted the Potomac and its tributaries with amazing accuracy.

Waterways were the only means of travel in those days, and little or nothing was known of the vast regions beyond the wilderness and marshes that bordered the rivers. Early settlers, necessarily, built their homes near the water ways, but the adventurous colonists were not long in exploring the unknown territory by land. They found and followed the "Potomac Path" used by the Indians, which in later years became the King's Highway or Post Road. This "path" was approximately the same route we now know as U. S. Highway No. 1 from Alexandria to Richmond, and thence on to the sea. Likewise, it was not long before the early settlers ventured inland to establish themselves, starting the great movement that opened up the hinterlands.

John Washington, the emigrant and great grandfather of George Washington came to Virginia 1656-1657. He established himself first on Pope's Creek in Westmoreland County sometime before 1660. In 1674 he and one Nicholas Spencer patented 5000 acres of land "in the freshes of the Potomac" between Dogue Run and Little Hunting Creek. Later, the area was divided between the Washington and Spencer heirs. The northern half, which went to the Washingtons, was referred to as Little Hunting Creek Plantation. Not until after 1740 was it known as "Mount Vernon."

Washington and Spencer acquired this land from Lord Thomas Culpeper to whom, with several other Courtiers, had been granted the whole of the "Northern Neck"—all that area between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers—with rights to convey and collect quit-rents. Lord Culpeper gained control of the entire grant and thus became sole proprietor of the Northern Neck. Later, Lord Thomas Fairfax inherited this vast area through his mother, Lady Catherine Culpeper Fairfax, only daughter of Lord Culpeper.

An interesting historical sidelight on the American scene is

injected at this point—that of the land agent, better known today as the real estate agent—an institution that not only has survived, but has thrived. Lord Fairfax appointed two such agents, at different times, giving them rights to convey and collect quit-rents. The first was Robert Carter, better known as “King Carter”, who is reported to have acquired some 330,000 acres for himself. The other was his cousin, William Fairfax of Belvoir, neighbor and close friend of the Washingtons at Mount Vernon. Many illustrious citizens, of whom we shall learn more in the following pages, acquired land through these agents.

To obtain title, grantees were required to “seat and plant” within three years. Where Washington and Spencer built their first lodging to satisfy this requirement is not known. It does not seem probable that any part of the present mansion house was built that early, but records and evidence found to date are somewhat inconclusive. For many years Lawrence Washington, the half brother of George, was credited with building the first permanent house when he married Anne Fairfax in 1743 and brought his bride to live there. But records, and physical evidence found in the foundation, indicate earlier construction which may have been placed there by George’s father. It may never be possible to pinpoint the date or the person who started the project, but later remodeling and expanding is well documented. One of the earliest known buildings on the plantation is the Grist Mill on Dogue Run. However the mill we see today is not the original. It is a careful reconstruction done some thirty-five years ago on the original foundation.

John Washington died in 1676. In his will he bequeathed his interest in the five thousand acres to his son, Lawrence. In 1690 the tract was divided, Lawrence Washington taking the eastern half facing Little Hunting Creek and the Spencers the western half facing Dogue Run, which included the mill site.

Tracing further the chain of titles, Lawrence bequeathed his portion to his daughter Mildred. In 1726, Mildred’s brother, Augustine, purchased the tract from her and her husband, Roger Gregory. Mildred Washington Gregory was the Aunt and god-mother of George Washington. Augustine was George’s father. The mill site, which belonged to the Spencers, was acquired by the Washingtons. Augustine moved with his family to the plantation when George was three years old. The minutes of Truro Parish indicate that they lived here from 1735 to 1739 and it was during this period that the mill on Dogue Run was first built. Augustine Washington

deeded this plantation to his eldest son, the second Lawrence Washington (elder half-brother of George), who came into possession of the property when he reached the age of twenty-one in 1740. Augustine put such value on the mill that he especially mentions it in his will, stating that if Lawrence should die without children "then the land and the mill . . . shall go and remain to my son George and his heirs."

This second Lawrence Washington married Anne Fairfax of nearby Belvoir in 1743. Lawrence had a military career in the Caribbean and elsewhere under British Admiral Vernon, to whom he was so attached that he named his estate on the Potomac in honor of the Admiral and, thenceforth, it has been known as "Mount Vernon." Lawrence died in 1752. Among other provisions he willed "unto my loving brother, George Washington" all his land in Fairfax County, but provided a life interest for his widow. The widow married George Lee and went to live elsewhere. In 1754 George bought the life interest of his sister-in-law and thus became sole owner, in his own right, of approximately one-half of the original grant of 5000 acres. Note that there was a lapse of nearly eighty years between the original grant to his great grandfather and George's personal ownership.

After their father's death, George spent much time at Mount Vernon with his half brother. During that period he had frequent contacts with the Fairfaxes at nearby Belvoir and many other prominent personages. It was during this period that he began his career as a surveyor and gained much valuable experience that served him well in military campaigns and civilian activities in later years.

In 1759, at the age of twenty-six, he married Martha Dandridge Custis, widow of Daniel Parke Custis. After extensive remodeling of the house he brought his wife and two step-children, John Parke Custis and Martha Parke Custis, to live at Mount Vernon. Young Martha, or "Patsy" as she was fondly called, died here at sixteen years of age. John grew up and married Eleanor Calvert of Maryland. Their seat, between Alexandria and Washington, was known as Abingdon. To them four children were born. At this time war stalked the land. Revolution was imminent. Washington was elected General, to command all Continental forces. One week after the surrender of the British at Yorktown in 1781, at which John was present, he died. General Washington adopted John's two younger children, Eleanor Parke Custis (familiarily called Nellie) and George Washington Parke Custis. They were brought up as the children of General and Mrs. Washington.

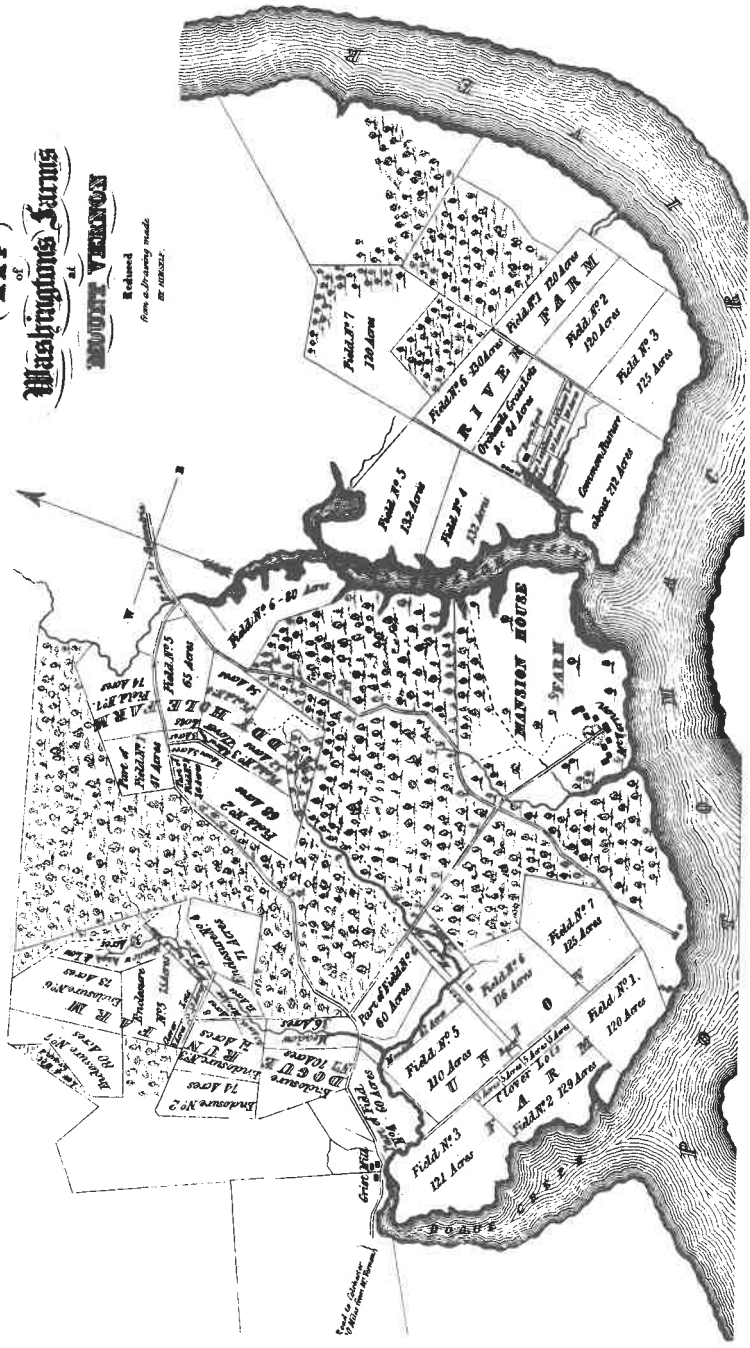
Tracing the family relationship a bit further, for the sake of clarity, Nellie married Lawrence Lewis, son of Washington's sister Betty and Col. Fielding Lewis of Fredericksburg. In his diary Washington wrote "they were married by candlelight on February 22, 1799 at Mount Vernon." It happened that this was Washington's last birthday. He died on December 14 of the same year. But he gave 2000 acres of his best land to Lawrence and Nellie as a wedding gift. This became known as Woodlawn Plantation, the story of which is told separately in this publication.

George Washington Parke Custis married and became the owner of an estate on the Potomac across from Washington, D.C. He built what is variously called Arlington House or Custis-Lee Mansion. The only child born to them was a daughter, who married General Robert E. Lee.

We hope that this simple tracing of family relationship and chronological dates will clear up some of the confusion that seems to exist, and the tangled maze into which some readers fall when they try on their own to find the connecting links. It took this writer many years of diligent reading to piece it together. Now let us turn back to the estate itself for a further look.

General Washington loved the land. He was a farmer at heart, and he himself once indicated that nowhere else was he so contented as on his acres. Once the original plantation was his, he began acquiring adjoining tracts, until at its peak his holding in the Mount Vernon Plantation alone totaled over 8000 acres. This he divided into five farms, each an independent unit with its overseer and contingent of slaves. These farms were known as Mansion House Farm, Union Farm, Muddy Hole Farm, Dogue Run Farm and River Farm. He grew some tobacco but other crops also, since he did not consider tobacco suited to his soil or his long-range plan of soil conservation. He produced for domestic consumption, but carried on trade with England and other countries as well. He ground and shipped flour and meal from the mill on Dogue Run, where he also had a distillery. The plantations were under the general management of his younger brother, John Augustine, for approximately three years and his cousin, Lund Washington, for more than twenty. During the years of his absence, General Washington was constantly in touch with his manager by letters and reports. While he was President, he visited Mount Vernon no less than fifteen times. He was in actual absence some sixteen years—eight in the army and eight as President—but his connection with Mount Vernon, from the time his father took him to live there at age three, stretched over a period

(MAP)
of
Washington Farms
at
MOUNT VERNON
Reduced
from a drawing made
in 1832-33.



—(Picture courtesy Mount Vernon Ladies Association)

Plat of five farms: Mansion House Farm, Union Farm, Muddy Hole Farm, Dogue Run Farm and River Farm. (Reduced from a drawing made by George Washington).



—(Picture courtesy Mount Vernon Ladies Association)

The Grist Mill on Dogue Run after restoration

of approximately sixty-four years. He died at age sixty-seven.

His final return in 1797, after the war and eight years of Presidency, was as a national hero. There was a constant stream of visitors. They came from Alexandria and the Federal City. They crossed from Maryland and points North on Clifton's Ferry, landing on River Farm near Wellington, then traveled around the head of Little Hunting Creek on Muddy Hole Farm and approached the "West Gate" of the Mansion Farm over what we now know as the Old Mount Vernon Road. They came from Fredericksburg, Williamsburg and points south, all converging at the West Gate which was the main entrance to the mansion until many years after the death of Washington. This constant stream of visitors was quite a drain on the host, both physically and economically. It proved to be an important factor which finally led to breaking up the large plantation.

The first land sold off by Washington was 360 acres to his cousin, Lund Washington, who for so many years had been his manager. (More details are found in the account of "Hayfield".) Woodlawn, together with the Grist Mill on Dogue Run, was given to Nellie and Lawrence Lewis as a wedding present. (See story of Woodlawn Plantation.) Tobias Lear, his secretary and tutor to Mrs. Washington's grand-children married into the Washington family. Lear's second wife, Fannie Bassett, was Mrs. Washington's niece. Lear was looked upon as a member of the family. He was given a life interest in Wellington, a house built originally in 1740 by William Clifton who operated Clifton Ferry and from whom Washington bought the 1806 acres called River Farm for 1210 pounds of Virginia currency. After the General's death, and that of Mrs. Washington, twenty-three relatives shared equally in the residue of the Mount Vernon estate. General Washington died December 14, 1799, leaving Mrs. Washington a life interest. She died in 1802. In his will General Washington freed his slaves.

Three generations of Washingtons lived at Mount Vernon after Martha Washington's death. Bushrod Washington, an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court and a nephew of the General, was given the Mansion and four thousand acres. He died in 1829, leaving the Mansion House and 1200 acres to his nephew, John Augustine Washington, who survived him by only three years. Finally, Mrs. John Augustine Washington in 1850 conveyed the estate to her son, John Augustine Washington, Junior. These were the last Washingtons to live at Mount Vernon. The farm was in an unprofitable condition. In fact, it was a liability and the build-

ings were deteriorating. It was offered to both the State and Federal Governments for historic preservation but neither would buy. Finally the owners were approached with an offer of three hundred thousand dollars, the intended use to be commercial. Fortunately, the owners realized the historic significance of the property and the inappropriateness of commercialization. At this point a small group, headed by Miss Pamela Cunningham, made a precarious offer of two hundred thousand dollars, in an effort to save the mansion and some two hundred acres of the farm as a National Shrine. Thus the Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union, whose valiant efforts are well-known, took shape and has carried on. To them we owe an everlasting debt of gratitude for saving the most revered historical shrine in America.

It should be said, in passing, that while General and Mrs. Washington lived at Mount Vernon there was much intercourse between friends and neighbors. Through the West Gate of Mount Vernon most of the important personages of the period entered and the Washingtons passed to attend church, visit their neighbors or journey forth to more distant places. Among their nearest neighbors were the Fairfaxes at Belvoir and Mount Eagle, Masons at Gunston Hall, Blackburns at Rippon Lodge, Parson and Mrs. Weems at Bel Air, Daniel French at Rose Hill and many others. Of Washington's neighbors you will learn more in the stories that follow.

Life was by no means dull. It was made interesting and gay by the amusements of the era such as games, horse races, riding to hounds, dancing and sometimes plays. They were especially fond of dancing the Virginia Reel and Minuet. The highlight of the social season in Virginia and elsewhere was Washington's Birthday Balls. After the Revolution, General Washington then being the national hero, balls in his honor were held in Alexandria, Philadelphia and many other places on February 22.

In 1947 this pleasant custom was revived by friends and neighbors in the Mount Vernon area, who gather on February 22 each year to make merry and pay tribute to our most illustrious citizen.

The Quakers came in 1846, bought Woodlawn and took over the area for approximately 75 years. They divided the land into farms of 80 to 200 acres each and built sturdy houses for themselves, a few of which remain. When the electric car line to Mount Vernon was in operation (built in 1892 and discontinued approxi-



—(Picture from a painting by Ogden)

Nellie Custis' Wedding at Mount Vernon on February 22, 1799.

DANCING AT THE BIRTHDAY BALL, 1948—On February 22, each year since 1947, local residents gather to make merry and appropriately celebrate the birthday of their most illustrious citizen, General Washington of Mount Vernon.



mately forty years later) this was still considered farming country with dairy herds much in evidence. In fact, Thompson's Dairy, still a prominent business concern in the Washington area, had its beginning at Hollin Hall. At first, milk was shipped by river boats. Later milk was shipped each morning over the electric car line to a distributing point in the District of Columbia. Other small dairy farms sprang up and sold milk to this same distributor. From the time the Quakers began breaking up their farms into parcels, titles become too involved and complex for the layman to attempt to trace them.

Except for half a dozen limited operations, all farming as such, had been discontinued by 1932, when the George Washington Memorial Highway to Mount Vernon was opened. The entire area, including the outlying farms of the plantation, is rapidly becoming an urban community in the metropolitan area. Many public roads have been opened, old ones widened or paved; subdivisions have taken over. In 1964, undeveloped building sites in the Mount Vernon area are few and far between. Incredible as it seems, some of the more desirable ones have sold for more per acre than George Washington paid for the entire River Farm of more than 1800 acres some 200 years ago.

Mount Vernon, the shrine, may be reached by boat, bus or car but the "West Gate" is no longer in public use. Picturesque as it is, with its vista of the mansion, it is almost forgotten by natives and totally unknown to the millions of tourists who enter by the newer north gate—built at the turn of the century with contributions made by "the Patriotic Society, Masons and other citizens of Texas."

* * * * *

This, by no means, is a complete history of the Mount Vernon area. At best, it is merely highlights set down for those who point with pride to its historic past. It is hoped that it will help new residents to grasp the sequence and feel a little closer to the events that have brought us to 1964.

Belvoir Manor

By Edward B. Russell

The Right Honorable Thomas, Sixth Lord Fairfax, Baron Cameron, inherited from his mother, Lady Catherine Culpeper Fairfax (daughter of Lord Culpeper, once governor of Virginia) the vast estate of 5,700,000 acres of Virginia land, known as "The Northern Neck," lying between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers and extending from the Chesapeake Bay to the headwaters of these rivers. It comprised the present counties of Northumberland, Lancaster, Richmond, Westmoreland, King George, Prince William, Fairfax, Loudoun, Fauquier, Culpeper, Madison, Page, Shenandoah, Hardy, Hampshire, Morgan, Berkley, Jefferson, Frederick, and Clarke.

After experiencing no little difficulty in securing satisfactory agents for this immense acreage, Lord Thomas, in 1734, induced his first cousin (son of his father's brother Henry), Colonel William Fairfax, to resign a royal commission as collector of his majesty's customs at Salem, Massachusetts Bay, and accept the more remunerative position of general superintendent of his lordship's entire interests in the Colony of Virginia. On arriving in Virginia, Colonel William resided in Westmoreland County, where he no doubt made the acquaintance of the Washington family. Inter-marriage in England had united these families centuries before, and it is possible that the American descendants were familiar with this earlier association.

Not long after his arrival in Virginia, Colonel William Fairfax purchased the land and selected the site high on the precipitous banks of the Potomac to build the house which was completed by 1741 and named "Belvoir," meaning "beautiful to see."

Lord Thomas Fairfax disposed of his English estates and came to take up his permanent residence in Virginia in 1746, having made one previous visit. For two years he remained at Belvoir with Colonel William, but, in 1748, laid out a manor in the Shenandoah Valley, containing ten thousand acres, to which he gave the name of "Greenway Court." Here he lived until 1781, dying in his ninety-second year.

Colonel William Fairfax, the builder of Belvoir, was born at Towlston, Yorkshire, in 1691. He had been a soldier in Queen Anne's War; had served with honor in the Royal Navy both in the East and West Indies; had been chief justice of the Bahamas,

and governor of the Isle of Providence, displaying marked ability throughout and to the entire satisfaction of the home government. Returning to England in 1717, with his wife Sarah (daughter of Colonel Walker of Nassau) whom he married while in the Bahama Islands, he appears to have temporarily retired from public life until the year 1725, when he received the appointment of Collector of His Majesty's Customs at Salem, Massachusetts Bay, which commission he resigned, in 1734, at the request of Lord Thomas to accept the agency of his vast Virginia estate.

While in Salem, in 1731, his first wife died, leaving him four children:

George William, the oldest, was born at Nassau, in 1724. (He was successor to Belvoir, lifelong friend of George Washington, died in England in 1787.)

The other three, Thomas, Anne, and Sarah, were born in Salem, Massachusetts Bay:

Thomas, born in 1726, was an officer in the Royal Navy and was killed in a naval engagement with the French off the Coromandel Coast, India, in 1746, at the age of twenty.

Anne was married, in 1743, to George Washington's oldest half-brother, Lawrence Washington, and was the first mistress of Mount Vernon.

Sarah was married to John Carlyle of Alexandria, Virginia, who was a major and commissary in the French and Indian War, under General Braddock, in 1755.

Before leaving Salem, Colonel William married Deborah Clarke, who was born in 1708 at Salem, Massachusetts, and was widow of Francis Clarke and daughter of the Hon. Bartholomew Gedney, of Salem. It was with Deborah that he came to Virginia and established the homestead at Belvoir, where were born three children:

Bryan, born in 1737, became rector of Christ Church, Alexandria, Virginia, and the eighth Lord of the line, died at Mt. Eagle, Fairfax County, Virginia, in 1802.

William Henry, born in 1739, was killed at the Battle of Quebec in 1759, at the age of 20 years.

Hannah, was married at Belvoir to Warner Washington, first cousin of George Washington.

Colonel William Fairfax was not long in Virginia before he became active in the political affairs of the province, and, as member and afterwards president of the Colonial Council, occupied a position of influence and importance second only to the governor.

He was also a vestryman of Truro Parish (Pohick) from the beginning of his residence at Belvoir until his death in 1757. Both he and his wife Deborah, who died in 1746, are buried in the little cemetery at Fort Humphreys, now marked by a granite shaft.

After the death of Colonel William Fairfax, his oldest son, Colonel George William Fairfax, inherited Belvoir and resided there until his departure for England in 1773. At the age of twenty-four, he married Sally Cary, daughter of Wilson Cary of Celes, a celebrated belle of Williamsburg and an heiress in her own right. At this time he was a member of the House of Burgesses, and later succeeded his father in many important positions, including vestryman of Truro Parish.

George William Fairfax fell heir to the ancestral estates in England in 1773, the settlement of which necessitated his return to that country. Although the exact date of their return to England is not known, a letter written at Belvoir on May 10, 1773, regarding an inquiry concerning passage for himself, his wife, and two servants to England, makes it apparent that it was during the summer of that year that he placed his estate in the care of Colonel George Washington, and he, with his wife, sailed, never to see Belvoir again.

Washington and his family spent the last few hours before their departure at the Belvoir estate, saw Colonel Fairfax and his wife embark, and from the heights on which Fort Belvoir is now situated, waved a sad farewell to their departing friends. General Washington, even late in life, cherished the fondest recollections of the Fairfax home as is indicated in a letter to Mrs. George William Fairfax in England, after the death of Colonel George William:

"It is a matter of sore regret, when I cast my eyes towards Belvoir, which I often do, to reflect that the former inhabitants of it with whom we lived in such harmonious friendship, no longer reside there, and that the ruins can only be viewed as the mementoes of former pleasures."

In 1774, George Washington received orders from Colonel George William Fairfax to dispose of most of the chattel at Belvoir at public auction. The inventory of the sale, one of the few original records of Belvoir now available, indicates that the mansion was luxuriously and elegantly furnished.

Washington placed a rental notice in the Philadelphia Gazette, October 19, 1774:



NELLIE CUSTIS' WEDDING (which took place at Mount Vernon, 1799) re-enacted by a group of local citizens of the Mount Vernon area at the Birthday Ball held at Woodlawn in 1951. The ball is sponsored by the Mount Vernon Citizens Association.



—(Picture courtesy Associates' Photography and News Service)

All that is left of the once-grand Belvoir Mansion is an outline of its crumbling foundation.



—(Picture courtesy U. S. Army Photograph)

Artist's concept of Belvoir Mansion prior to its destruction.

"To be rented from yr to yr or for a term of yrs. Belvoir, beautiful seat of the Hon. Geo. Wm. F. Esq, on the Potomac in Fairfax Co. Va. The mansion is of brick two stories high with four convenient rooms and a central passage on the lower floor, five rooms and a large passage on the second. Servants hall and cellar below. Convenient to it are offices, stables, and coachhouses; adjacent is a well-furnished garden stored with a great variety of fruits, all in good order. Appertaining to the tract on which the house now stands and which contains 2000 acres of land are several valuable fisheries and a good deal of cleared land. The terms may be known of Col. Washington, who lives near the premises."

The plantation was leased to Rev. Andrew Morton for seven years.

For forty years Belvoir was the seat of one of the most refined and distinguished families in Virginia and was noted for its princely hospitality. Around this old homestead gather some of the most interesting events of an intensely fascinating and historic period.

The Fairfaxes, both in their official capacity in the Provincial Government, in their religious activities, and in their domestic and private interests, did much toward the development of early Virginia. Nor did they hesitate to give their sons in battle in the colonial wars, two of them being sacrificed. But of still more importance is the influence this distinguished family had on the character and education of the youthful George Washington in his studies in surveying at Belvoir, in his active service and companionship in the field with his instructor-friend George William Fairfax, in his social intercourse at the fashionable Belvoir. Although they were moderate Royalists, Washington testified when the confiscation of Colonel George William Fairfax's property was threatened:

"I hope, I trust, that no act of legislation in the State of Virginia has affected, or can affect, the property of this gentleman, otherwise than in common with that of every good and well disposed citizen of America. It is a well-known fact that his departure for England was not only antecedent to the present rupture with Great Britain, but before there was the most distant prospect of a serious dispute with that country, and if it is necessary to adduce

proof of his attachment to the interests of America since his residence there and of the aid he has given to many of our distressed countrymen in that Kingdom, abundant instances may be produced, not only by the gentleman alluded to in his letter of December 5, 1779, but by others that are known to me, and on whom justice to Colonel Fairfax will make it necessary to call if occasion should require the facts be ascertained."

The twenty-three-hundred-acre estate was not confiscated. However, the old mansion was destroyed by fire early in 1783, and the remaining ruins were further demolished by British guns from seven ships on returning down river after the American capitulation of Alexandria, when attacked by shore batteries and musketeers commanded by Commodore David Porter, in a five-day battle in September 1814 called "The Battle of the White House."

After fifteen hundred acres of this estate was purchased in 1910, the War Department turned the land over to the Corps of Engineers for use as a summer camp and rifle range by Engineer Troops stationed at Washington Barracks (now Fort Lesley J. McNair). The camp, which was officially named Camp A. A. Humphreys in 1917, became a great training center for Army Engineers during World War I.

In the fall of 1918, the United States Army Engineer School was moved here from Washington Barracks, and shortly thereafter, 1922, Camp A. A. Humphreys was redesignated "Fort Humphreys."

During the years 1931 to 1933 extensive explorations and excavations were made by the Colonel Edward H. Schulz who was then Commandant, Fort Humphreys.

The thick overgrowth was cleared and the outline of Belvoir mansion and the garden walls were disclosed. The ruins stand today, two hundred yards south of the end of Fairfax Drive. In the same area, over the graves of Colonel William Fairfax and his wife, Deborah, stands a stone memorial erected in 1921 by their descendants.

In 1935 the reservation was renamed "Fort Belvoir" after the name originally given the estate by Colonel William Fairfax.

Lebanon

By Mayme Parker

"Lebanon" was established in 1732 when the house was built by Edward Bates, a signer of the Fairfax County Resolves drawn up by his neighbor, George Mason of Gunston Hall. He also signed the non-importation agreement. The estate remained long in the family, and was passed on to at least three successive Edward Bates. It passed out of the Bates family in the mid-1880s. In 1914 it was acquired by the Miller Brothers, owners of an automobile agency of the area. They lived there only occasionally and did little to improve the property.

This 458-acre estate near Gunston Hall and Lorton was purchased in 1942 by the late Dr. Paul Bartsch and his wife, Dr. Elizabeth Parker Bartsch. Here they developed a wildlife sanctuary and arboretum, collecting ferns and many rare plants. This preserve became a mecca for students, boy scouts and others. Dr. Bartsch, an eminent naturalist and ornithologist, was a curator for the Smithsonian Institute before his retirement. He generously shared his knowledge and advice. Mrs. Bartsch, professionally known as Dr. Elizabeth Parker, welcomed gardening as a relaxing diversion from her busy life as a physician in Washington, 25 miles away. A few years ago, Dr. Parker with "the gentle but incessant prodding" of her husband, published a book entitled "The Seven Ages of Woman," thus adding another chapter to the already colorful history of Lebanon. The book, seven years in the making, was written during the morning hours from 4 to 6. It came from the press only a month after her husband's death in 1960.

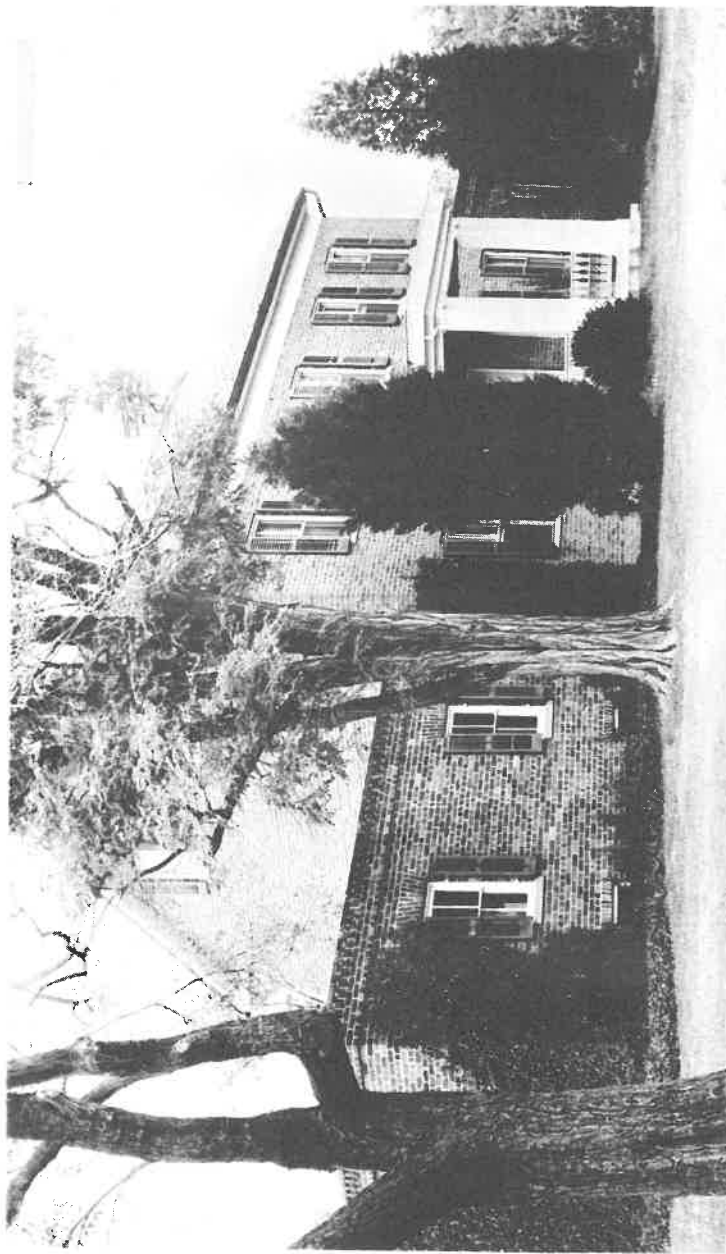
Mrs. Bartsch and her husband spent some time modernizing and repairing Lebanon and in building on wings. Unique features carried over from the original are corner fireplaces and a ceiling fresco pattern that survived in one room.

Lebanon has figured in the development of Methodism in the area for almost 200 years. Early Methodists met in a barn there to hear traveling ministers, among whom was Francis Asbury, the first Methodist Bishop to be ordained in America. Asbury came from England as a missionary to the colonies at an early age and worked for Methodism about the time of the Revolutionary War. On his visits to Mason's Neck where Methodists in Virginia were first organized, he would be the guest of Edward Bates at Lebanon.

Cranford Memorial Methodist Church, at the intersection of Colchester and Gunston Hall Roads, was the meeting place of the Methodist Historical Society of Northern Virginia in 1960. From there a pilgrimage was made to "Lebanon," the site where Methodism was first organized in Virginia, although the original barn no longer exists. This Church is built on what is believed by some to have been the site of the original Pohick Church in which George Washington was a vestryman. The present Pohick Church was finished in 1774, after which the Methodists alternated with the Pohick members in the use of their new church. In 1859, Mrs. Ellen Mason, widow of the last Mason who lived at Gunston Hall, organized a Methodist Sunday School at Pohick to which children of all denominations were invited.

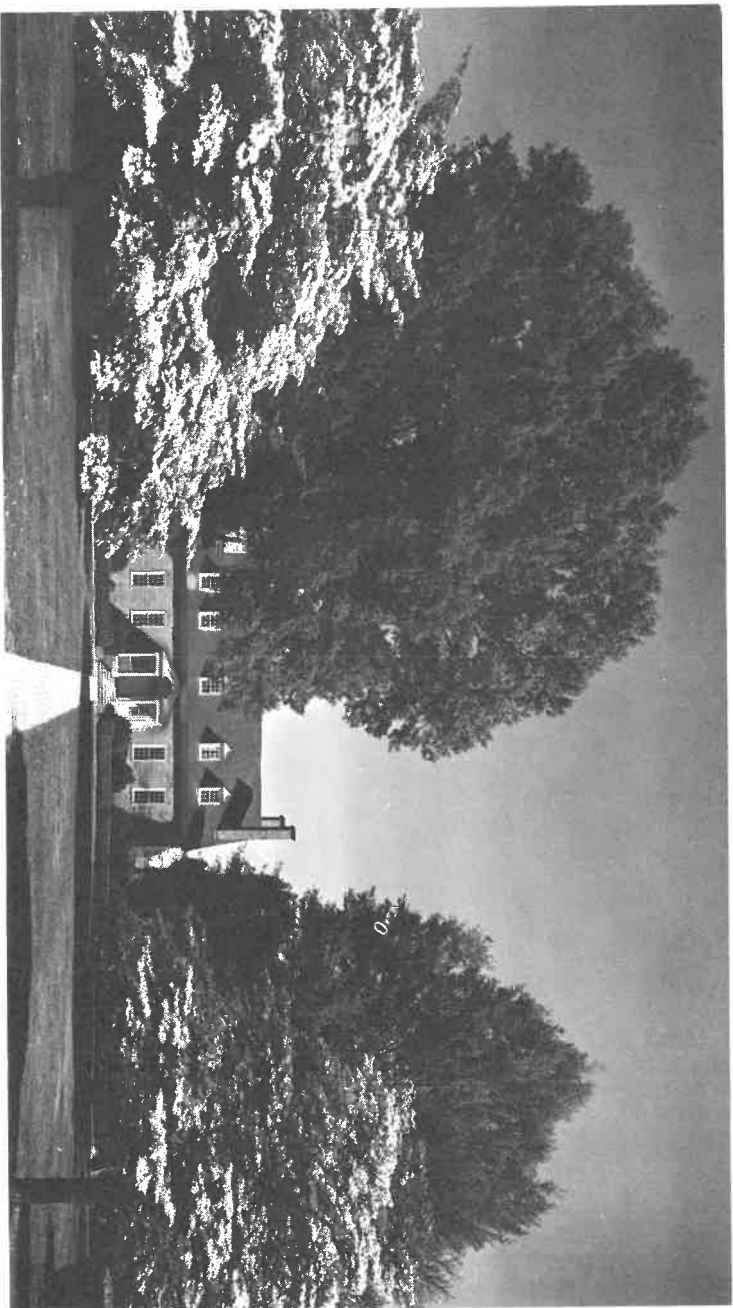
About 1857, John Taliaferro Lewis, a Methodist minister, built Lewis Chapel which was used for many years. The present Cranford Memorial Church includes the Lewis Chapel which was moved a few hundred feet and joined to the new structure, where it now serves as an educational building.

Dr. Parker has in preparation her own historical findings garnered during her research on Northern Virginia landmarks. A more detailed history of Lebanon may well be left to her.



—(Picture courtesy Associates' Photography and News Service)

LEBANON, built by Edward Bates in 1732, is closely associated with the beginning of Methodism in Virginia.



—(Picture courtesy Charles Baphe)

GUNSTON HALL, where George Mason IV lived and drafted the Virginia Declaration of Rights, most of which was later incorporated in the American Constitution.

George Mason of Gunston Hall

By Kenneth P. Neill

The first George Mason sailed from Bristol, England, after being hidden from the power of Cromwell, because of his being a loyal cavalier to the memory of Charles I, "The Martyr King." He left his home, Gunston Hall, near Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, in the Parish of Breewood, in the year 1651, and landed in Norfolk, Virginia.

His home was built upon a neck of land running out into the Potomac; the place was known as Accohick, and is about ten miles from the present city of Fredericksburg, Virginia. The point of land later became known as Marlborough or Potomac Point. Here also the second George Mason lived, died and was buried, according to the old record "at Accohick near Pasbytanzy."

Like his father, the second George Mason became a colonel and His Majesty's Justice of the Peace, with almost entire control of the affairs of the county.

Following a tradition in the Mason family, of naming things in America after the old country, they named the county of Stafford in Virginia for their beloved Staffordshire in England.

George Mason the second moved further up the Potomac, and in 1696 we find him acquiring 2,109 acres of land, between the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers, called "Doeg's Island." Eventually the Masons acquired the whole of "Doeg's Neck," as well as more land to the north, running as far up the river as the present Georgetown. Before his death in 1716 he had become a great landowner.

The second George Mason married three times. By Mary Fowke he had five children. The eldest was the third American George Mason. The third George Mason was perhaps the most charming of the early Masons. He held the same titles and performed the same duties as his father and grandfather had. In 1721 George Mason the third married Ann Thomson, daughter of Stevens Thomson. Of the many children born, three survived. George Mason the fourth was born in 1725.

When George Mason the fourth was ten years old his father's sailboat was overturned in a sudden squall on the Potomac, and George Mason the third vanished from sight at the height of his career, in 1739.

* * * *

It was a place for plain living and high thinking, a small house crowning a vast estate, a home of wealth with a library at its heart—"Gunston Hall."

Twenty miles south of the site of Washington, the plantation stretched along Mason's Neck above Gunston Cove (and Bull Run) toward Mount Vernon, one of the splendid mansions of the Potomac's Northern Neck. The chief crop was tobacco, the foundation of Tidewater economy.

Here lived a man who was and is sometimes referred to as a "Reluctant Statesman." Can these words be true of any man worthy of producing such noble thoughts and words of wisdom,

of a man known to few, but who by his power of thought shaped the freedom of so many, the way of life, and the law, by which so many countries would shape their own Constitutions?

Virginia gave to the American Revolution her bold commander of men in George Washington, her fiery-spirited orator in Patrick Henry, her gifted political genius in Thomas Jefferson. Yet for advice and approval these men turned to George Mason. Neither military leader, orator, nor lawyer, George Mason was a scholarly craftsman in the art of government, a tenacious champion of the individual. For the rebellious American Colonies, his Virginia Declaration of Rights provided a sense of purpose and direction.

In the American Constitution, his vigorous insistence for national concern is reflected in the first ten amendments, known as the Bill of Rights. In the long corridor of American History the figure of George Mason (1725-1792) is half hidden in the dusk. Yet this retiring patriot drafted one of the greatest documents of all time—the Virginia Declaration of Rights, adopted unanimously by Virginia's legislators at the capitol in Williamsburg on June 12, 1776.

The Virginia Declaration of Rights was the most significant document produced in Colonial America, it was a touchstone for the conscience of free men for all time.

Its sixteen eloquent articles breathe the air of the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights. It was the model for the Federal Bill of Rights, and its spirit animates all modern democratic covenants in protection of individual liberties. Here are three of these Articles:

1. "That all men are by nature equally free and independent and have certain rights—namely, the enjoyment of life; liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

2. That all power is vested in, and consequently derives from, the people.

3. That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community; of all the various modes and forms of government, that is best which is capable of producing the greatest degree of Happiness and Safety, and is most effectively secured against the maladministration; and that, whenever any government shall be

found inadequate or contrary to these purposes, a majority of the community hath indubitable, unalienable, and indefeatable right to reform, alter or abolish it, in such manner as shall be judged most conducive to the public weal."

So, in the first three articles of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, George Mason called for revolution three weeks before Jefferson's Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. In 1791 the Federal Bill of Rights amended to our Constitution all but six of George Mason's Virginia Declaration of Rights.

Can we forget or disregard any of our great thinkers? For herein our future lies. We need our Washingtons, Jeffersons, and Henrys. Also, it is well to have our dreamers of the future. Who will have the visions of tomorrow? And if free men have no more visions, how soon will the whole great traditions of 1776 perish from the earth?

Today Gunston Hall can be visited by the public. Deeded to the State of Virginia by Mr. Louis Hertle, whose thirty-eight years of loving restoration of house and garden ended with his death in September, 1949, it is now directed by a Board of Regents drawn from the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America. The house was opened in May, 1959, with fanfare that included a speech by Vice-President Barkley and attendance by the Governor of Virginia.

Sixteen miles south of Washington by crowflight and twenty-three by the new Shirley Freeway, whose uninterrupted course is about as close to crowflight as one can come in an automobile, Gunston Hall stands on one of the three successive promontories that look out over the broad Potomac as it flows south from Washington and Alexandria. On their heights, in the mid-eighteenth century, were the homes of three men whose names were known throughout the colony; Mount Vernon, remodeled by George Washington before taking the widow Custis there as his bride; Belvoir, residence of George William Fairfax, cousin of the Lord Proprietor and husband of the charming Sally; and Gunston Hall, the new house finished in 1758 by George Mason. The beauty of Mount Vernon is familiar; Belvoir burned just after the outbreak of the Revolution while the Fairfaxes were on a trip to England from which they never returned; now Gunston can be visited by anyone so inclined. Designed by William Buckland, one of the great architects of the Middle Colonies, it is a story-and-a-half

brick house, with dormer windows and entrance porches. There are stone copings at the corners, and each end is flanked with two massive chimneys. Buckland brought with him the books of the great contemporary architects of England. Gunston Hall's drawingroom woodwork includes broken pediments like those that had been introduced in the Queen's House in Greenwich by Inigo Jones, and the detail in the carvings of doorways, mantel, cabinets, and windows, including folding inside shutters, is as varied as the patterns of the railings that Jefferson put on the houses of the University of Virginia.

The paneling in the room that served as the Mason's dining room has the earliest Chinese Chippendale carving in the country. Also to the right of the spacious entrance hall, with its large carved pineapple symbol of hospitality hanging in the arch above the stairs, is the magnificent Palladian room, of which we have spoken in the previous paragraph. In the entrance hall, with musicians on the landing above, the children's dancing school, for which Patsy Custis used to come over from Mount Vernon, was held.

To the left of the hall are the study and the Masons' bedroom. The formal dignity of Gunston Hall is made human by the memoirs of one of the nine little Masons that arrived in orderly procession to populate the house. One of the two closets on either side of the fireplace, John Mason noted, held, in addition to Mrs. Mason's clothes, a slender green riding whip, which accompanied her on horseback but also had more intimate applications; the other closet, by happy but perhaps not always unrelated contrast, contained the jams and jellies and other small delicacies of the family table.

From the entrance door, one can look straight through the house to the garden. As one steps out of the south doorway into a delicately carved, five-sided porch adapted from the design of a Greek temple, one looks down a two-hundred-foot path that runs between English box, twelve feet high, planted by Mason. This path leads to the bluff overlooking the river.

On either side of this central axis, geometric beds, bordered by smaller descendants of those same box bushes, sparkle with colors from season to season. Where the bluff breaks to descend to the old deer park and river landing, steps lead down to a sunken garden, marvelous with its roses and eighteenth-century flowers. The drop is great enough for the tops of the magnificent trees in

the deer park—tulip poplars, oaks, beeches, occasional cedars—to spread like a carpet below the visitor, pastel in the spring, Persian in the fall.

Beyond the garden to the west is the family graveyard, where Mason lies and where the monument that he erected to his wife bears the inscription:

“Once She was all that cheers and sweetens Life,
The tender Mother, Daughter, friend and Wife,
Once she was all that makes Mankind adore;
Now view this Marble and be vain no more.”

In the restoration of the house, paint was carefully scraped and faithfully analyzed, and the rooms are now in their original colors.

Gardens, architecture, history; all three await the visitor to Gunston Hall. It may be reached via U.S. No. 1, Virginia 350 (Interstate 95), or the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The estate is open to the public daily throughout the year (except Christmas Day) from 9:30 to 5:00.

"Fairfax Arms" and "Colchester"

By Mrs. Robert V. H. Duncan

"Fairfax Arms," the Colchester Inn of yesteryear, built in 1750, continues to stand today much in its original state, although surroundings have drastically changed.

Location is on Mason's Neck near the Occoquan on the southernmost edge of Fairfax County, situated on a prominence high off the water just a "stone's throw" from the rushing, breathless junction of Shirley Highway and U.S. No. 1 at Woodbridge, and approximately three miles from famous Gunston Hall, home of George Mason, author of the Bill of Rights.

The tavern, one-and-a-half stories on a high stone foundation, bespeaks the activity of the 18th Century, when it was renowned as a favorite stop-off on the historic King's Highway or Post Road running from Philadelphia to Williamsburg. During its heyday, Fairfax Arms was famous for food and hospitality. Its reputation as a popular eating place was extolled and described in the effusive words of John Davis, an 18th century writer and itinerant visitor:

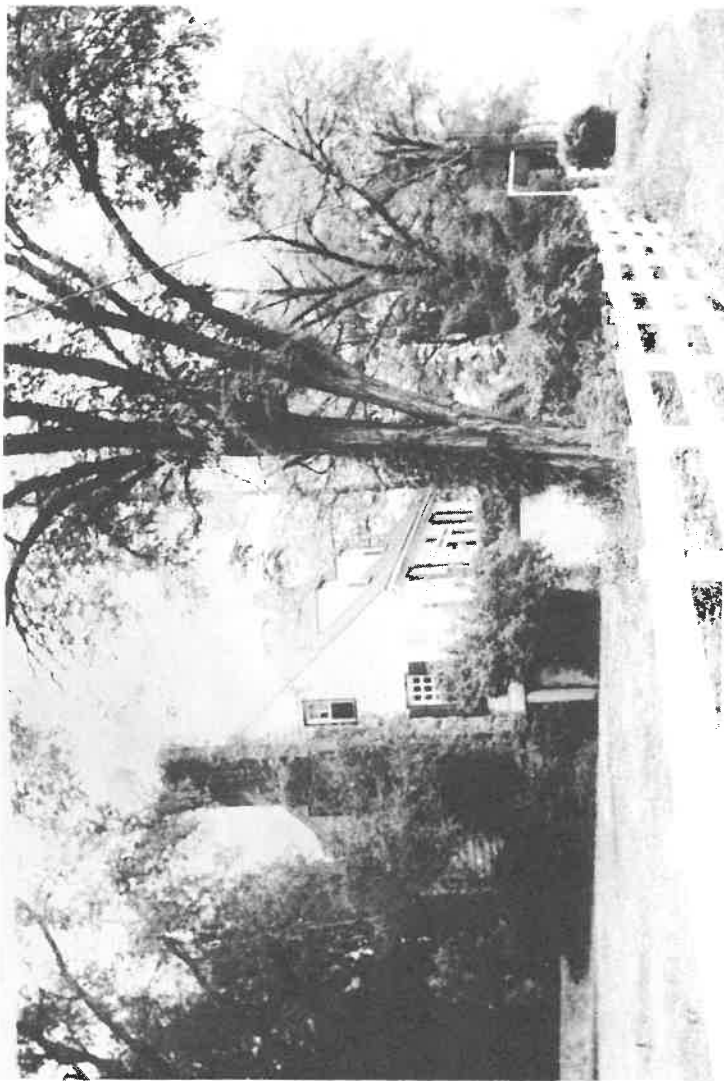
"every luxury that money can purchase is to be obtained at first summons; where the richest viands cover the table, and where ice cools the Madeira that has been thrice across the ocean . . . no man can be more complaisant than the landlord. Enter but his house with money in your pocket, and his features will soften into blandishments of delight"!

Yes, small and unpretentious in outward appearance, Fairfax Arms has an illustrious history. It was a regular meeting place for the vestry of Pohick Church (Truro Parish) and frequent visitors included George Washington and George Mason. An interesting reference sets forth as follows:

"William Courts kept an inn at Colchester (Washington's Diary) 'Dined at Courts,' 1771."

In Toner's Collection the following is found:

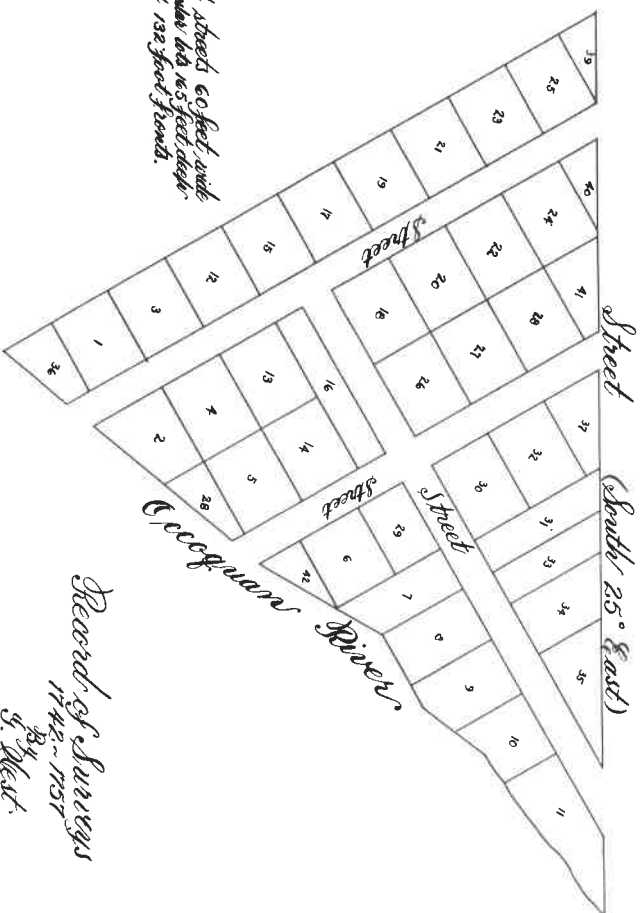
"A William Courts bought a tract of land in Fairfax Co. in 1767, and says in his deed that he is lately from Charles Co., Md. This tract was located near the mouth of Pohick Creek, and adjoining the Hollowing Point, tract of Col. Geo. Mason. The witnesses to this deed were Peter Wagener, Hector Ross, Alex. Henderson and Pierce Bayly, all Colchester residents."



--(Picture courtesy Associates' Photographic and News Service)

FAIRFAX ARMS, built in 1750, was a tavern at the Occoquan Ferry on old King's Highway (or Post Road) to Williamsburg.

A Plan of Colebrook Town



— (Picture courtesy Mrs. Robert V. H. Duncan)

Record of Surveys
1742 ~ 1757
By
S. West.
Surveyor.
June ~ 1754

A unique feature is the twin-door entrance, common at the time; one being used as a public entrance, the other as a "private," "family" or "ladies" entrance. First impression of "Fairfax Arms" is that of a "dollhouse type" structure, but inside, the six rooms, though small, are so well proportioned as to give a feeling of spaciousness. Two mammoth free-standing stone chimneys, each with five flues, appropriately frame the building on the north and south sides. All four downstairs rooms have corner fireplaces and retain original woodwork, which is intriguingly askew. Of added interest are the tavern mantels.

Although this building has survived over two centuries, ownership has been in relatively few hands. Perhaps this accounts for its "feel" or charm as frequently commented upon by visitors. Of course there have been some concessions to modern progress (installation of lights, heat and usual conveniences) but predominantly all earmarks of the past remain. The original 35-foot well provides delicious, icy water from a trustworthy spring which has the distinguished record of having gone dry only once in the past 216 years! The Innkeeper's bar with crude "butterfly" shelves is retained but now serves as a focal point for artifacts and collectors' items in the living room. Upon viewing the gigantic hand-hewn rafters in the basement, one inadvertently and automatically is drawn to reach out to touch with something of a caressing stroke the nearest beam. Over the years the place has been lived in and loved. It is not infrequent to come upon hand wrought nails, an occasional piece of silver or a coin when digging in the garden outside. Recent owners have been: the Gillinghams, the A. Harmon Roberts and currently, Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. H. Duncan of Alexandria, all of whom used it as a private home, each contributing to its preservation and restoration. The present occupants, antique lovers, have taken pleasure in furnishing it in keeping with the Colonial Period.

Having described the Inn in some detail above, it now seems appropriate to conclude with a brief look at the historic town in which it played such an important role. The town of Colchester (pronounced Colechester and named for an English town in Essex) was authorized by Act of the Virginia Assembly 1753. This recited:

"that a town on Occoquan river, in the County of Fairfax, on the land of Peter Wagener, would be very convenient for trade and navigation, and greatly to the ease and advantage of the frontier inhabitants."

It vested twenty-five acres of land belonging to Peter Wagener in Peter Wagener, Daniel McCarty, John Barry, William Elzy,

and Edward Washington, gentlemen, in trust'.

On record in Fairfax County Court House is a plat showing the triangular layout of the town. According to a Record of Surveys (1742-1757) by G. West, Surveyor, dated June 1754, the plan of Colchester Town shows 41 lots and a market square—lots to be of "165 feet deep and 132 foot fronts," and stipulates that all streets should be 60 feet wide. Lots were sold with the usual requirements that the purchaser should:

"within two years next after date of conveyance of the same, erect, build and finish on each lot so conveyed, one house of brick, stone, or wood, well framed, of the dimensions of twenty feet square, and nine feet pitch at the least. . ."

The town flourished, primarily due to its location. Situated on both the important King's Highway (Post Road) and the navigable waters of the Occoquan, atop the hill leading to the Colchester ferry, Colchester was convenient to all modes of travel and industry of the day. Its prosperity is closely linked with the name and activities of Major Peter Wagener. He was the town's patron. Well educated in England, he was a man of affairs and influence connected by friendship and marriage with other families prominent in Virginia life of the 18th century.

Although the town started off under favorable auspices, boasting a tobacco warehouse and a mail exchange, its prosperity was short-lived. By 1789, it had declined and as a thriving town had waned, while Alexandria, 25 miles away, (originally known as Belhaven) rapidly moved forward. Colchester's doom was definitely sealed with the ravages of a tragic fire which destroyed almost the entire town. Today, only two of the original buildings remain, "Fairfax Arms" being the only identifiable one, the other having been remodeled several times.

What of Colchester today one queries? Slowly, the site of old Colchester Town seems to be re-awakening. Its future on the perimeter of the fast-expanding Greater Washington Metropolitan Area, has attraction as a suburban residential section, in close proximity yet offering detachment from 20th Century hustle-bustle. New residents are gradually coming its way, responding to this appeal. How pleasant on a quiet summer evening to stroll the old King's Highway to the river and enroute let fancy have its way, mingling thoughts of the Present with those of the illustrious Past—of other travellers, who by foot, horseback or carriage traversed the same historic way!

"Rippon Lodge"

By Richard Blackburn Black, Rear Admiral, USNR (Ret.)

Rippon Lodge was named after the cathedral town of Rippon (now "Ripon") in Yorkshire by its builder Richard Blackburn. A year or two after the present owners acquired the property, an English lady remarked during a visit, "But why do you spell it with a double 'p'?" The hostess replied that the name had been spelled that way in 1725, the year of Richard Blackburn's move from England to the colony of Virginia. The English lady then said, "Oh, I would doubt that this could be possible. We so rarely change anything in England!"

One can imagine Blackburn, the young colonist, arriving in the new land with his household goods and possibly some servants and livestock, quickly riding out to the beautiful site overlooking the mouth of Neabsco Creek, the Potomac, and the distant Maryland shore and exulting in the knowledge that this land, made available to him by the payment of "quit-rents" to Lord Fairfax, was to be his to work and develop into the great plantation it would some day be. Possibly, with the vision and ambition of the very young, he could see the stream of barges and shallops plying from his wharf in the creek out to the ships in the river with great hogsheads of the prime tobacco he was to grow on the nearly twenty-one thousand acres he would one day control.

That he started the construction of his new home in 1725 is attested by a roughly scribed date in one of the oaken framing timbers, but it is difficult to conjecture why he would have built it within a few yards of an existing house, except that the site was on a high knoll overlooking the spectacular view of river and rolling meadows and forest, and that he may, even then, have contemplated tearing down the older house. In a water-color rendition in one of the now famed sketch-books of Benjamin Latrobe, the English architect who visited Rippon Lodge and its then owner Colonel Thomas Blackburn in 1796, is this notation, "The house on the left hand must have been built near 100 years ago, as the oldest people now living do not remember to have heard when or by whom it was built." Mr. Jack Ratcliffe, a historian in the area, believes that the older house of the Latrobe

sketch may have been the home of Captain Martin Scarlett whose grave, dated 1698, lies only a short distance away. Legend has it that Colonel Thomas Blackburn razed the old house in about 1799 when he made additions to Rippon Lodge. Certainly there is no evidencet of fire, which would have left remnants of charred wood near or over a part of the old brick foundation which has been excavated by the present owners.

The house, which is of frame construction with much of its beaded pine clapboard still intact and most of its hewn oak framing timbers still as sturdy as on the day they were cut from the surrounding forest, stands on a high ridge roughly in the center of the 570 acres which now comprise the property. The entrance road from U. S. Highway Number One crosses the King's Highway, known earlier as the Potomac Path, which was the main post and coach road between the northern and southern colonies. A bronze tablet placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution records the fact that "over this way passed General Lafayette and the French and American troops on their way to the Battle of Yorktown." This early road can be traced all the way across the property and in many places it tells a story of the hardships of road travel in colonial days, for at frequent intervals where the grade is cut down deeply there are auxiliary tracks on both sides around what must have been almost bottomless quagmires of mud in rainy weather. One can conjure up a picture of horses and men striving to move heavy field guns and wagons, —and it is just as well that the shouted language of the struggling French and American soldiers has ceased to echo through the wooded glades!

Over this same road George Washington often traveled, as shown by entries in his journal: "October, 1773, 19. Mr. William and my Brother set out for home, as Mrs. Washington, Mr. Custis and myself did for Wmsburg—dining at Colchester and lodging at Colo. Blackburn's.", and, "June, 1788, Tuesday, 10th. Between 9 and 10 o'clock set out for Fredericksburg, accompanied by Mrs. Washington, on a visit to my Mother. Made a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, in Colchester, and reached Colo. Blackburn's to dinner, where we lodged."

Association of the Blackburn family with the Washingtons and Mount Vernon is not limited to a few neighborly overnight stops. There is a persistent rumor supported to a degree by publication in a number of books including Hayden's **Virginia Genealogies**, that Richard Blackburn had something to do with the building of the first Mount Vernon for Lawrence Washington, the older

half-brother of George. It is confirmed that he did some contracting (or "undertaking," as the profession was then called), for it is recorded in the Vestry minutes that he built the first Church for Truro Parish:

"1733, June 9th, Mr. Richard Blackburn agreed with the Vestry to build a Church at the Cross Roads near Michael Reggan's; 'Forty feet in length, two and twenty feet wide, and thirteen feet pitch, to be weather boarded, covered, and all inside work perform'd and done after the same manner the work upon Pohick Church is done, for the sum of thirty-three thousand five hundred pounds of tobacco'."

Undoubtedly Richard's early schooling in England included some study of architecture for there are certain evidences of classical treatment in Rippon Lodge, for instance the "Jerkin roof-ends" which are characteristic of the finest eighteenth-century English design. The original house, as shown in the Latrobe sketch, was a simple story-and-a-half Georgian farmhouse with gabled stoops on each side and with what looks like a separate kitchen building beyond a small fenced garden area. At about the end of the eighteenth century Thomas Blackburn extended the house by adding a room and a stair-hall downstairs and by lengthening the wide hall and adding a third bed-room upstairs. A third great chimney at the northwest end provided fireplaces upstairs and down for the new rooms.

The drawing room, from wide baseboard to high ceiling, is paneled in ruby red pine which gives dramatic background for antique furniture, old silver and crystal, and early eighteenth century mirrors. The floors in this and other rooms are of random-width pine planks with their edges tree-nailed together and their under sides deeply notched to fit the floor joists. In places where the wear has been greatest the tree-nails have been exposed and appear in section. An interesting added feature of the house, and one that has caused much romantic conjecture, is a stone-and-brick-lined tunnel leading out from the cellar into what used to be a deep ravine, but which is now filled to make a broad platform on which several score English and American boxwoods form an interesting garden labyrinth. Some have thought that the tunnel was a means of escape in case of attack, but there is evidence that it was not built until the time of the renovation near the end of the eighteenth century, and certainly there were no dangerous Indians in the vicinity by that time. Most probably the passage was an entrance through which food was carried from an outdoor kitchen.

"Tea" bushes still growing on the lawn are reminders of the non-importation agreements adopted by the colonists as a protest against taxes levied by Great Britain on East Indian tea just prior to the Revolution. The plants were imported from Bermuda, have a red berry sometimes called "Tea Berry," and the leaves were probably dried and used as a substitute for tea.

Among the records collected through the years by Judge and Mrs. Wade Hampton Ellis, who purchased and restored the home in 1924, is an account of a meeting of a Committee of Safety, chaired by Colonel Thomas Blackburn at Rippon Lodge, which took several actions designed to prepare the area for possible war with Great Britain. An amusing item on the agenda was a discussion of the cut and colors of a uniform for the militia.

Two daughters of Rippon Lodge became mistresses of Mount Vernon. In 1785 Julia Anne Blackburn, daughter of Colonel Thomas, married the Hon. Bushrod Washington, an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, who was a nephew of George and the inheritor of a portion of Mount Vernon. John Augustine Washington, a nephew to whom Bushrod bequeathed Mount Vernon, married Jane Charlotte Blackburn. These two women are buried with their husbands in the Washington tomb at Mount Vernon. After the latter was buried in 1855, the tomb was sealed and no others have been placed there.

Many romantic legends cling to old Rippon Lodge. Two duellists have died in its drawing room. John Baylis, who married Richard Blackburn's eldest daughter, Jane, was mortally wounded in Quantico churchyard in 1765 by Cuthbert Bullitt, second to John Scott, the original challenger. Friends on the scene had almost arranged a reconciliation when an altercation with Bullitt resulted in an exchange of fire. Baylis was taken by carriage to Rippon Lodge where he expired in a few hours. In 1809 Bernard Hooe and William Kemp fought on the Maryland shore and the wounded Hooe was taken by boat across the Potomac to die at Rippon Lodge. A century later an article in a weekly newspaper of the area, printed in 1911, sheds additional light on these events. Under a photograph of Rippon Lodge is this statement:

"Very old house, near Dumfries, this county, once home of the Blackburns, an old Prince William family connected with the Washingtons, the 'Rattlesnake Grahams', and other people of note. The fine paneled woodwork of its interior is unusual in this part of Virginia. Many tragic

stories are told of Rippon Lodge. More than one murder is said to have been committed there. The victim of a fatal duel bled to death on its parlor floor. The house is said to be haunted in such a ghastly and sinister fashion that no one will occupy it, and the public road has changed its course to avoid the neighborhood."

It is not known whether this was a tongue-in-cheek statement by the editor or a revelation of belief in supernatural manifestations only a little over a half century ago. However, the present owners have had a little sport with some of the hired help as recently as three or four years ago. After one young girl had worked for a few months it was thought safe to let her know that there were fifteen graves, including those of Richard and Jane, Thomas and Christian and others of the Blackburns and Atkinsons, just two hundred paces from the house. The girl's eyes widened, and the owner quickly stated that they were graves of relatives and "friends of ours." With her eyes widening still more she said, "They ain't no friends of mine!" But she stayed for over a year.

Judge Wade Hampton Ellis, mentioned earlier, did an excellent job of restoration. He added a wide columned verandah, a wing at each end, and increased the size of the property from about three hundred to over a thousand acres. He opened up the King's Highway and several other old trails like the Rolling Road, where tobacco hogsheads were rolled by horse or oxen to the old landing in Neabsco Creek, and used these roads as bridle paths. He brought in scores of ancient boxwoods and protected the house from lightning by running copper cables to the tops of the great trees around it. There are those who say that the original graceful lines of the Georgian period were not improved by the additions, but certainly the house became more livable.

Judge Ellis was a descendant of Christopher Blackburn of Kentucky, who traced his ancestors to Rippon in Yorkshire, but the exact connection with Richard has not been learned. In 1952 the place was acquired from the widow of Judge Ellis by Richard Blackburn Black, a fifth great grandson of the builder, and his wife, Aviza Johnson Black. They have gone on, within their means, with the restoration so well started by Judge and Mrs. Ellis. Two 1924 vintage baths have been replaced by modern ones done in colonial decor, and the entire upper floor has been remodeled by the famed colonial architect, Walter Macomber, adding clothes closets, but keeping the feeling of the eighteenth century.

The spot on Neabsco which has seen waterfront activity since the days of tobacco shipping now has a piling and back-fill wharf and a gantry crane such as might have stood there two hundred years ago, and tied to the wharf, called "Blackburn's Potowmack Landing" is a replica of a 17th- or 18th-century shallop designed by William Baker, the naval architect who drew the plans for MAYFLOWER II and her shallop. Built in 1960 by James E. Richardson of Cambridge, Maryland, the craft is thirty feet long with a two-masted sailing rig and a 30-horsepower marine engine carefully concealed inside a sea-chest which is apparently lashed down and being carried as baggage. William Baker, writing of this boat in *Yachting Magazine* and telling of the sail home from the Eastern Shore building yard said, "The spirits of the former plantations along the lower reaches of the Potomac probably smiled pleasantly as the shallop passed, but I dare say there were some startled expressions on the faces of the present-day boatmen." The AVIZA Shallop has already taken part in several historic festivals, one at Mount Vernon and one in Alexandria for the Old Seaport Homes Tour, and in May of 1964 it was sailed in a reenactment of Captain John Smith's landing in Piscataway Bay in 1608.

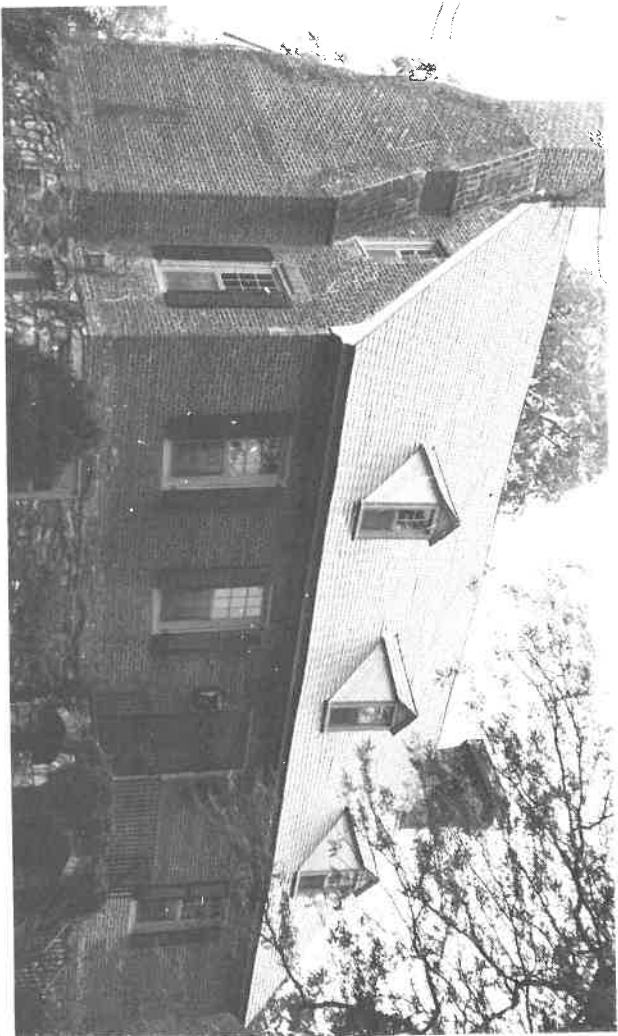
Mrs. Black is honored at Rippon Lodge not only by having the shallop named for her (If a man has two loves they must both have the same name!), but by display in the entrance hall of a portrait of her fifth great grandfather. The oil painting, attributed to Jean Rancois Valle' who painted up and down the Mississippi and the Missouri in the early nineteenth century, is of Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Boone, supposedly done from life in Missouri in 1816.

The author Frances Parkinson Keyes once told Mrs. Ellis, "Many houses seem to be stiffly standing up. Rippon Lodge, with its canopy of lofty trees and its nestling boxwoods, seems to be comfortably sitting down!" For almost two hundred and forty years it has survived the ravages of time and fire. As recently as April, 1963, when a thousand acres of woodland nearby were burned and the wind-whipped flames jumped the highway and burned ten acres of the property within three hundred yards of the house, three pumpers and forty men stood by wetting down the shingles until a fortunate shift in wind direction stopped the burning embers which were falling on and around the house. Thus the firemen of the local volunteer units showed their reverence for this old monument of the past. Moreover, they showed it for three days and nights while the fire roared on, — and loud were



—(Picture courtesy Richard Blackburn Black, Rear Admiral, USNR)

RIPPON LODGE, believed to have been built by Richard Blackburn about 1725.



—(Picture courtesy Associates' Photography and News Service)

BEL AIR, for many years the home of "Parson Weems," the first biographer of George Washington and author of the famed (but now questionable) cherry-tree story.

the sounds of praise for the firemen, many of them teen-agers, who would step back to have their mates spray water on their burning shoes and reddened faces, and then back to the job.

Each year on the fifteenth of July, flowers are placed on the grave of Richard Blackburn, who died on that date in 1755 "in the 52nd year of his life." Recently a new grave has been added. At the request of the Historical Association of Prince William County the two stones marking the oldest grave in the county have been set up near the other fifteen. (The new Route 95 highway is to pass near the old site, a mile and a half up Neabsco Creek and just a stone's throw from the Tayloe Foundry, established in 1737, and the remains of a slate quarry, posing some fear that the grave might be lost or defaced.) The headstone records that Rose Peters departed this life in 16....., with the last two digits not easily decipherable, but they look like 49 or 79. The footstone can be read easily and says, "She is gone, O she's gone, to everlasting rest, to Christ our bless'd Savior, who lov'd sinners best." So now, along with the more respectable ghosts, there is the ghost of a "sinner." Possibly, on nights of bright moonlight when no one of the modern inhabitants is at home, the rooms and halls will glow with the light of many candles and the dulcet sounds of a harpsichord playing a minuet will be wafted through the open windows, and—watching the festivities from the outside, hoping to be invited in, will be the poor sinner, Rose Peters.

"Bel Air"

By Mayme Parker

One of the interesting pre-Revolutionary homes of the area is located on Route 640 a few miles from the town of Occoquan. It was built about 1740 by Colonel Charles Ewell, a prominent industrial promoter associated particularly with the early ports of Dumfries and Occoquan. It is "Parson Weems" rather than Ewell, however, who lends interest and color to "Bel Air," as the estate was known.

Weems married into the Ewell family in 1795. He settled at Dumfries, but in 1808 or 1809 took his family to live at Bel Air, having become part owner to satisfy a loan he had made to his mother-in-law. It seems probable that he fabricated the story for which he is best known—that of Washington and the cherry tree—while living at Bel Air. The present owners of Bel Air, Mr. and Mrs. William E. S. Flory, have compiled and published in pamphlet form a brief sketch on the Parson and his life. From this we gather the following:

Mason Locke Weems, parson, author, book-seller, fiddler, and raconteur par excellence, was born October 11, 1759, at Marshes Seat, Herring Bay, Anne Arundel County, Maryland. After his early schooling in Maryland, he made numerous voyages on the trading vessels owned by his brothers. It is believed that he studied medicine or surgery at Edinburgh, Scotland between 1777-1779, and he may have been impressed as a ship surgeon on a British-man-of-war. In 1779 he returned to Maryland where, following the death of his father, he freed the slaves bequeathed to him. He studied for the ministry between 1780 and 1784, in England.

He was made a deacon by the Bishop of Chester, September 5, 1784, and was ordained as an Episcopal priest September 12, by the Bishop of Canterbury. He and his companion, Edward Gantt, also of Maryland, were the first Americans to be ordained in the Episcopal Church following the Revolutionary War. Between 1784 and 1793, he served as Rector of All Hallows, Anne Arundel County and later at St. Margaret's, Westminster, Maryland.

In 1791 he began his publishing career. In 1793, he severed his formal connection with a settled Rectorship, although he filled the pulpit at Pohick Church in Truro Parish, Fairfax County, at various times, particularly in 1801-1802, and preached on numerous occasions in other churches.

In July 1795, he married Frances Ewell, daughter of Col. Jesse Ewell of Bel Air (son of Charles Ewell, the builder of Bel Air) and settled at Dumfries. They had ten children, eight of whom survived infancy.

In 1800, he published the first edition of the "Life of Washington." This was quickly followed by new and revised editions to satisfy the tremendous demands. The fifth edition, published in 1806, contained for the first time the famous cherry-tree anecdote. The story of Friend Potts discovering the Commander-in-Chief in prayer at Valley Forge appeared in a newspaper version in 1804 and was incorporated for the first time in the sixth edition, published in 1808. The biography has appeared in 90 editions, the last in 1927.

Bel Air, a two and one-half-story country house of 14 rooms, was built on the traditional center-hall plan. It is brick, on a stone foundation. The stone foundation is above ground and serves as a basement. A full-length attic spans the building. The house measures 38 by 51 feet. Walls vary in thickness from three feet to one foot. Interesting architectural features are, (1)—the pre-Georgian front with its unbalanced window placement, a style prevalent in Virginia before 1700; (2)—the high elevation of the main floor; (3)—the mammoth 20-foot outside chimney on the southwest side; (4)—the carriage entrance on the northwest side; (5)—the movable partition panels in the central hall which permitted conversion of the drawing room into a great hall for special occasions; (6)—the open staircase with its two landings off the central hall; (7)—very small dormer windows; (8)—the large cooking fireplace on the brick-paved ground floor.

Actual use to which the rooms were put varied from time to time. The large dining room on the ground floor, evidently used as a primary living room originally, was called the "wool room" by the Ewells who delicately withdrew their living arrangements to the upper levels, thus converting the ground floor to menial uses. A keep, a secondary kitchen, laundry room, and wine cellar or "dungeon" complete the arrangement of rooms on the ground floor.

The large drawing room on the main floor, sometimes called

the "state dining room," is dominated by an architectural fireplace; the faded red paint on the woodwork matches the original color found under six coats of paint. The small study or sitting room to the right of the drawing room is known as the Washington Guest Chamber. The library across the hall was a family sitting room. The office at the end of the hall was used as a family dining room.

The small bedroom above the stairs on the upper floor was Parson Weems' study. It is said that he selected this remotest room as his own to secure a sanctuary from his mother-in-law! The master bedroom and two other bedrooms are on this floor, also. A fifth bedroom has been converted to baths and closets to meet modern living requirements.

The first restoration of Bel Air was undertaken around 1875, following a period of disuse during and after the Civil War. Only minor structural alterations were made at that time, or during a later restoration begun in 1949. Additions, mainly decorative, erected in 1875 and in 1926 have been removed. The house had no authorized occupancy for a period of approximately 18 years preceding its purchase in 1948 by the present owners.

The coming of highways and such modern conveniences as telephones and electricity has made possible the transformation of this "charming Colonial derelict," as it was described by one author, into a modern dwelling which nevertheless retains its integrity as a substantial pre-Revolutionary building.

Recognizing that Bel Air stands among the historic houses of the area, the Elizabeth McIntosh Hammill Chapter, Virginia Society Daughters of the American Revolution of Manassas, placed a bronze plaque on the building May 2, 1964, with an impressive ceremony in keeping with the DAR program of marking historic sites.

Rockledge

By Mrs. Laurence Almon Barnes

John Ballandine, builder of Rockledge, was a controversial figure. By Thomas Jefferson he was considered "a sham and pretense." George Washington is said to have once summonsed him to court for a careless error. Washington, however, at times thought well of him as evidenced by the enterprises which he encouraged, and even shared with him.

Ballandine was a gentleman of good family. He descended from the Ewells, who built Bel Air and had large holdings in the Occoquan area, and from the owner of a Liverpool tobacco ship that plied the Rappahannock River in 1720. He and his sister were more than once entertained at Mount Vernon. His only son was a member of Phi Beta Kappa at the College of William and Mary in 1779.

Records of his early life are limited but it seems he operated a packet boat on the Potomac for some fifteen years. His enterprises were many; his imagination active. It was said by some "his reach outstretches his grasp." At any rate most of his ventures, soon or late, proved to be misadventures.

In the 1750's he turned from waterways to manufacturing. He acquired an interest in land on Occoquan Creek and organized a settlement near the falls, where he built several mills and an iron forge. The iron ingots were brought from a furnace at Neabsco, in which he was a partner. At one time he was operating sawmill, bolting mill, bake house and various storehouses at Occoquan. His holdings increased, but failure stalked his path. To meet financial obligations he borrowed from John Semple of Maryland. By 1765 he lost his entire property through foreclosure. His interest turned back to waterways. This was the period when many minds were considering canals and locks as ways of circumventing the falls, especially in the James and Potomac Rivers. Ballandine, with encouragement from Washington, Mason and others conceived the plan of a canal and locks along the Potomac which he actually started at Seneca Falls. But this, too, failed, as did his other projects. Perhaps it should be said of him that he was "ahead of his time."

Sometime during the 1750's he built an eleven-room house near the falls of Occoquan Creek, overlooking the picturesque gorge be-

low. The site on which the house stands was cut out of a rock ledge. A nearby quarry supplied the stone for the mansion. William Buckland, who designed and built Gunston Hall, supplied plans and workmen. The finished product was called Rockledge.

It is a simple house with great dignity. Stone houses are not usual in Tidewater, Virginia. This one is built in two parts. The main portion is a three-story structure, one room in depth with gable roof. The smaller part was added later. It contains a large kitchen with a room over it which was perhaps used for servants. This room was joined to the main part of the house by a hall with a staircase leading to the kitchen. A long pantry joined the kitchen to the dining room. The house contained simple but very good woodwork, including six conventional mantels, chair rails, baseboards and cornices in the principal rooms. There is a handsome cornice on the outside. The brick kitchen fireplace is six feet wide. It contains an iron crane, two kettles, and a brick oven on the right. This oven is topped with a long piece of iron which has imprint of an enormous hand with fingers outstretched, in the middle of it. The original H and L hinges remain on doors and cabinets throughout the house. The floors are dark wood of random widths. The widest board (on the third floor) is eighteen inches wide. The floors have settled and therefore are not even. The doors and the twelve-inch window sills slant and are also uneven. Outside of the kitchen is a spring-house where containers of milk were kept in a cement trough. The spring which flowed down the rocks at the rear of the spring house furnished drinking water for many people. A chicken house, outhouse and another building that was used as a tool house, remain on the property.

Below Rockledge, as Ballandine called it, small terraces outlined with native stone walls are cut into the hillside. Here box-wood and sweet william grew.

Buckland, who built Gunston Hall, is believed to have built Rockledge, probably in 1758. There have been only four owners. (1) John Ballandine who called it Rockledge and lost it to satisfy a loan. (2) Nathaniel Ellicott, who called it the Stone House. (3) The John Janney family who owned it from 1829 to 1929 (one hundred years) and called it Janney's Mansion. (4) My father-in-law, Fred Almon Barnes, a sentimental gentleman who purchased it from the Janney family in 1929. He called it by its original name, Rockledge. He was attracted to it when he cruised down the Potomac in his yacht and anchored in the Occoquan Creek, just opposite the unoccupied Janney Mansion. It reminded him of his grandmother's home in Lanesboro, Pennsylvania, which set on a

hillside overlooking the Susquehanna River. He renovated it, putting on a new roof, putting in heat, tapping the spring water into the house, building two cisterns, adding two bathrooms and some closets. After my father-in-law died, my mother-in-law would not part with it. Due to her failing health my husband and I sold our home in Chevy Chase and moved, bag and baggage, to take care of her for the rest of her life. After her death my husband inherited Rockledge, the buildings and enough land to protect it. His brother Wilbur J. A. Barnes inherited the rest of the property.

The house was unique in many ways but one amusing way was the traffic jams that would occur during a party. We had many large ones and, due to the house being one room in depth, I would say "hello" to some guests and when they were ready to leave they would go upstairs and down the back stairs leaving by another entrance where my husband would be stationed to say "good-bye."—when all the time they were there he had not known they had come. We had merry and gay times, also some sad ones. Out of all the gracious living we learned many things. An old house has great charm and comforting atmosphere. When I'd enter it, no matter how tired, worried or plain lonely for our parents I might be, I always became relaxed and felt as though someone older, wiser and understanding was there to comfort me.

Rockledge is now lonely. We had to leave it on my birthday, January 24, 1960, due to the nearby quarries blasting the foundation loose and making it unsafe to live in. Now in 1964, two hundred and six years after it was built, the question is "What next for Rockledge?"

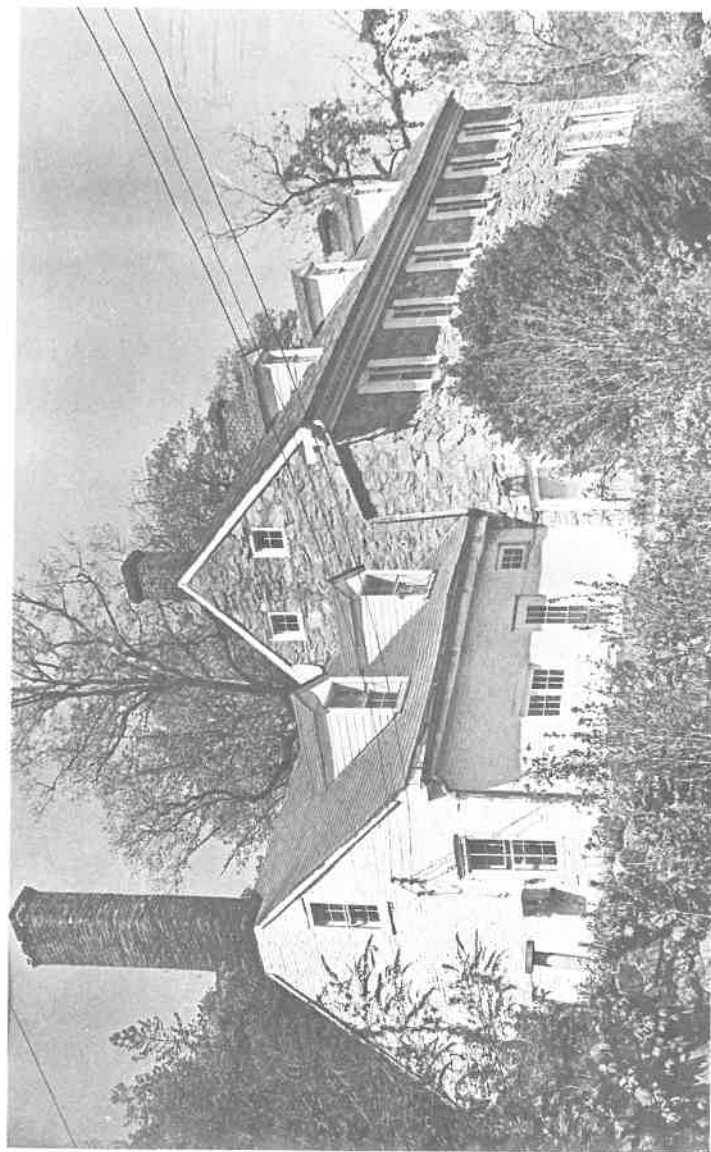
Retirement

By Viola Merigold Orr

On old King's Highway there lived one of Washington's close friends, Walter Brooke, first Commodore in the Virginia Navy during the Revolution. His home, Retirement, is shown on the map produced by George Washington Ball as being in the neighborhood of "Hayfield" and "Mount Erin." It is not shown on Callahan's map in his "Memorial to Washington"; but appears on that of G. M. Hopkins as "Sam Collard," "Y. Owen Kerby & Bros.," both names being in the chain of title to the property. I am practically certain that this is the same property shown on the Survey, page 63, of the Record of Surveys book, 1742-1757, of Fairfax County, Virginia, as: "Mrs. Sarah Brooks . . . 400 acres" having a corner in the line of John Colvill's 600 acres, and lying between the 1600 acres labeled "Dan'l French v Mrs. Sarah Brooks" and the 400 acres "M. Sampson Darrells"—no doubt the same Sampson Darrell who was Sheriff of Fairfax County, Virginia, in 1767.

"Retirement Farm" was designated on plats prepared by Joseph Berry, County Surveyor for Fairfax County, as late as the 1940's. About this time the original house was owned (but never occupied) by Wisconsin's U. S. Senator Robert Lafollette, Jr., whose wife was a member of the Virginia families of Young and Oden. Although needing repair, it was described by a prominent Virginia architect (Joseph H. Orendorf), as "a large, gracious house, still extremely charming. Basically it was clapboard with beaded siding, and had a quite nice entrance porch with little pediment and simple square posts. At its right side was a tremendous chimney similar to that at Colchester and like some of those in Williamsburg."

Sold to Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Cohen, the house was remodeled in 1945 by the addition of two wings, a huge round-columned portico, and a yellow stone facade. Letters from Washington to Walter Brooke were found in the walls during the remodeling process. They were given to local residents and so far have not been located. A small amount of discarded paneling was given to the owners of "Mount Erin" and has been used there in a sun room. A plaque in the yellow stone gatepost now designates the house as "Benmae Manor" and contains the dates 1710 and 1945.



—(Picture courtesy Mrs. Laurence Almon Barnes)

Perched on a rock ledge, high above the village and overlooking Occoquan Creek, ROCKLEDGE has maintained majestic vigil for more than 200 years.



—(Picture from "Historic Landmarks" by W. H. Snowden)

LITTLE HOLLIN HALL, originally the "Spinning House."



—(Picture from a water color by Miss Mary La Follett)

RETIREMENT, before alterations were made.

In the Virginia Magazine, Vol. x, p. 89, Prof. St. George Tucker Brooke of Morgantown, W. Va., states "(9) Commodore Walter Brooke, first Commodore in the Virginia Navy in the Revolution, was the son of Thomas Brooke of Maryland, and of his wife, Sarah Mason, aunt of George Mason of Gunston Hall . . . He had been a midshipman in the British Navy. It is claimed that at Washington's suggestion he bought a plantation near Mount Vernon. He called his place "Retirement." He lived, died and was buried there. Commodore Brooke's son Taliaferro Brooke, while a youth died at Retirement and was buried there. It is said that Washington ordered a tombstone from Paris, through La-Fayette, which was brought over to Retirement and placed at the head of Taliaferro Brooke's grave, where it remained for 100 years. It was then removed, with the remains, to the graveyard of Zion Episcopal Church in Charles Town, West Virginia, by a granddaughter of Commodore Brooke. It may be seen there today . . ."

Indeed the tombstone may be seen there today, and also a stone marking the grave of Mary C. (or G.), wife of Jabez B. Rooker and daughter of Commodore Walter Brooke of Fairfax County, Va. If Walter Brooke was buried at Retirement his remains either were not removed to Charles Town, or else there was no tombstone to mark his grave.

Volume I, Virginia Magazine of History & Biography, page 333, gives a sketch sent in by Miss Hazel R. Rooker of Charles Town, West Virginia (the granddaughter mentioned in the above paragraph). In part, I quote: . . . "sketch of Commodore Walter Brooke, her grandfather, whose name it will be recalled was included in the list of officers of the Virginia Navy during the Revolution published in the July, 1893, number of the magazine. Commodore Brooke was one of the three officers of that grade connected with the Virginia Navy at that time . . . He resigned his commission Sept. 30, 1778 . . . It is to be regretted that the record of his public service is so meagre but from the fact that the State of Virginia saw fit to present to him and his descendants 10,000 acres of land, it is presumed that she placed a reasonably high estimate on them."

On page 207 of the "West Virginia Guide to the Mountain State"—West Virginia Writers' Project, paragraph 12, the following appears: "Zion Episcopal Church, E. Congress Street between S. Mildred and S. Church Sts." (Charles Town, West Virginia) ". . . Surrounding the church and separating it from the street, is a cemetery in which are graves of about 75 members of

the Washington family and of many Revolutionary and Confederate soldiers . . . West of the church in the Rooker burial plot, partly hidden by a sassafras tree, is a tombstone erected 1788 by Lafayette in memory of 'Master Taliaferro Brooks' the child of his friend 'Commander Walter Brooks. Originally placed in the family burial plot at 'Retirement' near Alexandria, Virginia, the stone was brought to Charles Town in 1880 by Miss Harriet Rooker, granddaughter of the Commander . . ."

The stone, which is about three feet in height and of white marble about two inches thick, shows in bas-relief a cherub among clouds looking down upon a child recumbent on a raised slab, a man standing beside it, one hand on the forehead of the child and the other upon his own brow, a young woman kneeling in an attitude of prayer and an older woman, elaborately coiffed and gowned in the fashion of the day. Below this scene, the following appears:

"IN MEMORY OF
MASTER TALIAFERRO BROOKE
BORN
MAY 25, 1782
DIED
JAN. 10, 1788

The grave first hallow'd
in this Sacred earth
Contains the promise
of uncommon worth
These friends in soothing
hope this stone have given
The child once theirs
a Cherub is in Heaven"

Tradition has it that Retirement had its ghosts. In the early spring or fall mornings, when the mists are heavy and driven by strong winds, it is said that ghostly white horses sometimes race across the lawn. Mr. Cohen told the writer he had seen them only once!

Hollin Hall

By Mrs. Winfield Scott Macgill

Considerable confusion prevails in the minds of some with reference to George Mason and his place in our history. It is little wonder. Few realize there were at least six generations by the name of George Mason in Virginia. The one about whom we have heard most was George Mason, IV, who built Gunston Hall, wrote the Fairfax Resolves and the Virginia Bill of Rights, which later was adapted to the Constitution of the United States. But some of his predecessors and descendants also have a place in our local history.

In 1693, the second George Mason in this country erected a foundation, to serve as a fort, when he was one of the Potomac Rangers appointed by the Royal Governor of Virginia to protect settlers against the Dogue Indians. Several old papers contain references to "Mason's fort, or place, in upper Stafford County," as the present-day Fairfax County was still designated in 1693. It is probable that the first part of the original Hollin Hall was built on the fort foundation in the early 1720's. In 1721, George Mason, III, married Ann Thomson, only daughter of Stevens Thomson, who was Attorney-General for Virginia during the reign of Queen Anne, and took up residence on this site. The Thomson family's home in Yorkshire, England, was named Hollin Hall. Apparently the name of the ancestral home was adopted.

When George Mason, III, died in 1735, George Mason, IV, of Gunston Hall, inherited the property. By 1779, George Mason, IV, had given Hollin Hall to his son Thomson. Thomson married Sarah Chichester and lived in Hollin Hall for about twelve years before his father started work on a new and larger house for him, not two hundred feet from the existing one. However, while Thomson served in the Revolutionary War, his wife and family stayed at Gunston Hall, until after the surrender at Yorktown. During this period Thomson, with a young Mr. Allison, maintained a "snuff business" at Hollin Hall. After the war Thomson brought his family back to his seat.

Letters of George Mason, IV, reveal that he was trying to get building materials for Thomson's new house as late as the month before he died in 1792, so it is unlikely that the new house was built before 1793 or possibly even later. But the new house was built only to be destroyed by fire during the War of 1812.

The family then moved back to the original house, which had in the interim been used by the many Scottish and Irish spinners and weavers brought over by Thomson's father, George Mason, IV, of Gunston Hall.

Edward Gibbs, a Quaker, bought Hollin Hall and 500 acres of land from George Mason of Spring Bank and Thomson's widow, Sarah, in 1852. The present owners of Hollin Hall have the original note, written in 1855, in which this George Mason asks permission to bring the body of his mother back to the "family burying ground" at Hollin Hall. As of the present writing, 1964, no one has yet found the sunken stones of the burying ground which must be within a short walk of Hollin Hall. These stones, if located, might clarify some of the rumors and stories about life at Hollin Hall before 1779.

In 1881, another Thompson family purchased 300 acres of Hollin Hall from Gibbs and began Thompson's Dairy. About 1914 Harley Wilson acquired the property and after living some years in the original home (the spinning house), built a large brick home across the road. He moved there about 1925, leaving some of his wife's relatives at the old house. At this time the family began to speak of the new home as Big Hollin Hall and the original home as Little Hollin Hall. It is known as Little Hollin Hall today.

John McPherson acquired Hollin Hall after the death of Mr. Wilson and commissioned Walter Macomber, well-known restoration architect, to restore the original house and add a wing, being careful to use a style of architecture in harmony with the original. The present owners bought the property in 1951. Ernest Frank, Director of Design for Colonial Williamsburg, was the architect employed for further additions to the original house.

A Mason seal from a wine bottle, similar to those unearthed recently at Gunston Hall, was found several years ago in the foundation of the house which burned—perhaps a relic of the christening of that home. Who knows? When more digging can be done in the foundation of the burned mansion and the old burying ground is discovered, perhaps more can then be added to the Mason story in Virginia.

Copy of letter to Edward Curtis Gibbs of Hollin Hall from George Mason of Spring Bank:

"Dear Sir

My Son goes down to pay for the Lard, you sent us some days since; and I take the opportunity to inquire **where** you are now Insuring your Houses? Up to the War, I continued to insure in The Loudoun Company; where I had insured the Buildings at Hollin Hall, before you purchased the Place, and where, I believe you continued to insure them after you bought it.—They ceased to insure during the War, and knowing nothing of the condition of the Company after its termination, I have not renewed my Insurance since.—As I know that no one has a better opportunity of knowing, and understands such matters better than yourself, I beg to enquire what is the present condition of the Loudoun Company, and whether you still insure with them; as I wish to insure again in some reliable Institution my dwelling House etc. My New Barn, is insured in one of the Baltimore Company's.

My Son, is so delighted with your success in raising Wheat, that he has perswaded me to try a Field this Fall in that Grain; but to do so effectually, will require a heavy expense in Seed and Fertilizers, and Money is now so scarce with me, that I am getting nothing of the Interest on all my Investments for nearly Thirty Years in Virginia Stocks— This I can but hope, we soon shall, as the Country seems settling at last—that I hardly feel able to encounter the cost.— Please advise him for the best; for I can rely on no one's Experience and Judgment so well as yours.— He is active and industrious, but young and inexperienced; and I always refer him to you for counsel, when he is about to undertake any thing in the Farming Line, as the person most capable, and on whose Friendly kindness we can most safely rely for information and advice.—

I am still confined almost entirely to the House, with little prospect of ever improving in Health so far as to be able again to attend to out door Business; so *(son's name) has to supply my place entirely; as well he should, since every thing I have in Landed Interest, as well as most other matters, will so soon— in the course of Nature be his.—

I should be very glad indeed, to see you here, and hope soon to do so; but if you are too busy, I think the young Ladies, your Daughters, might sometimes call and see this old decrepid Friend.—It would give me great pleasure if they would.—

Present me most respectfully and kindly to your good Lady, and believe me, as ever,

Very truly yours

G MASON

Spring Bank Va. Sept. 12th 1868—

To

Mr. Gibbs
of Hollin Hall
Fairfax County
Virginia”

*Note: (All caps, spelling and punctuation are as shown in the letter. We cannot decipher the son's name. It looks like Georgie.)

Cleesh

Mount Eagle—Mount Erin—Mount Comfort

By Mrs. William M. Orr

Cleesh is the forgotten dwelling of an almost forgotten man. John Colville, "late of Newcastle upon Tyne but now of Fairfax County, Virginia" (May, 1755), was a ship owner, merchant, vestryman of Truro Parish, a Colonel in the Militia, a burgess elected in the first election held in Fairfax County and owner of extensive tracts of land in Virginia and Maryland, according to an account in the Journal of the State Legislature. Record of Surveys, 1742-1757, Fairfax County, Va., shows "Jno. Colvill's 600 Acres," with adjoining tracts.

Cleesh (variously spelled "Clish" and "Cleish," according to the information or spelling ability of the notary or scrivener entrusted with the preparation or recording of documents) appears among the will and land records of Fairfax County for almost a hundred years. In his will, John Colville describes his various holdings, and having sold to his brother Thomas, "for two shillings and the usual affection" a large tract of land, he bequeaths to Thomas "for and during his natural life . . . my now dwelling plantation called Cleesh on Great Hunting Creek containing one thousand acres together with . . . but at the decease of my said Brother my will is and I do hereby give and bequeath the said plantation called Cleesh . . . unto the right Honorable the present Earl of Tankerville and his heirs . . ." He later makes additional bequests to the "present Earl of Tankerville" described as "son of my Father's Brother's Daughter" stating "with the free consent and approbation of my said Brother my heir at law." This latter statement seems a little optimistic in view of Thomas' letters and his will.

In two letters dated at "Clish," the first in 1764, Thomas attempts to secure escheat land containing about "47 acres" for which application to the Proprietary was being made by another person. Thomas apparently defeated his purpose by two statements: (1) A wish "not to be in the power of the Great man or his agent"; and (2) "for whoever has the marshes, can force the owner of the tract to buy or sell on his own Terms." After the death of Thomas, the 47 acres was conveyed to the Earl of Tankerville and was later purchased by Bryan Fairfax.

Poor Thomas seems to have been unsuccessful in settlement

of John's estate to his own satisfaction. His last resort was to set forth his grievances in detail in his will dated the 8th of October, 1766 (only 15 months before his death). He names George Washington as one of the Executors of his will, with the somewhat prophetic provision: "AND WHEREAS in all Probability my Executors will have considerable Trouble in settling and adjusting my affairs—toward their encouragement I give and Bequeath unto George Washington Esq. the sum of one hundred Pounds Current money—and I Give and bequeath unto John West, Junior, a further sum of one hundred Pounds Current money. . . ."

The will was proved in Fairfax County 6th January 1767, but it was September 1797 before the estate was settled. An examination of the "Writings of George Washington," Vol. 2, 1757-1769, pages 480, 483 and 484, indicates the "considerable trouble" began very soon. In a letter of Mr. George Pearson dated 15th Sept. 1797, Washington says, ". . . no consideration short of being the surviving executor of his will and the imperious necessity occasioned thereby of bringing matters to a close could possible have induced me to resume any agency therein . . ." Letters of George Washington re the Colville Estate were printed by Dr. G. Adler Blumer in pamphlet form (See Vol. 6, Wm. & Mary Quarterly, (1st) p. 63.)

MOUNT EAGLE

After Cleesh passed into the hands of the heirs of the Earl of Tankerville, it was divided into "Lotts" according to a "survey of the land called Clish in William Payne's platt thereof." Lotts 1, 3 & 4 were purchased by The Reverend Mr. Bryan Fairfax, who was Rector of Christs Church in Alexandria 1790 to 1792, but resigned to return to England when he became Lord Fairfax VIII, Baron of Cameron. He also purchased the 47 acres of escheated land, and established MOUNT EAGLE, where it is said he built his dwelling. Mount Eagle is well known, appears on most maps, is now the home of Dr. Carson L. Fifer.

Lott No. 2 was purchased by Roger West and apparently added to his home, "West Grove." Various other conveyances were made out of Cleesh. Hooe and "Colonel Charles Little of Cleish in Fairfax Co., Va., were appointed attorneys for the Earl of Tankerville and his brother the Honorable Henry Astley Bennett. Deeds of confirmation were executed and recorded, perhaps because the alien laws just passed might create a cloud upon the title of land conveyed direct by the heirs of the Colville estate. The lands or portions thereof, out of Cleesh, conveyed to John

Richter, Roger West and Baldwin Dade eventually came into the hands of John and Francis Ashford, who had named their homeplace MOUNT COMFORT, and a part of the Clish land became the property of Thomas Tracy who named his home MOUNT ERIN.

MOUNT COMFORT

April 10, 1840, Francis Ashford and Henrietta, his wife, conveyed to their sons, John Ashford and Francis P. Ashford, 177 acres beginning in the Old Colchester Road, in the supposed line of the Clish tract.

When John and Francis P. Ashford conveyed to W. Tasker Weir on March 10, 1852, they called the 147-acre tract "MOUNT COMFORT." Weir conveyed to Hugh Rice whose name is shown on one of the old maps. Rice conveyed to James McWilliams and the property is indicated by McWilliams' name on the G. M. Hopkins map, No. 3. Both Mount Erin and Mount Eagle are shown on that same map.

Mount Comfort was owned successively by Shull, and by Farr, Keith & McCandlish, from whom it was purchased by my husband, W. M. Orr, 1945. Retaining the name given the property by the Ashford family, he conveyed the property to Mount Comfort Cemetery Corporation and proceeded, as President of the Corporation, to develop a garden-type cemetery, which is now owned by the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, D. C. On September 23, 1949, the 13th Lord Fairfax, Baron of Cameron, Thomas Brian McKelvie of Scotland, while visiting relatives and ancestral holdings in this country, made his only public appearance at the dedication of Mount Comfort Cemetery. In his dedicatory address, the young Lord expressed the hope that the never-to-be forgotten alliance between three of his ancestors (for whom Fairfax County was named) and George Washington might be carried on between the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain. News articles and photographs appeared on that date in the Alexandria Gazette, the Fairfax Herald and the News Observer of Herndon.

MOUNT ERIN

We had leased and occupied the house for over a year before we learned that the property had an older name than "Finella Farms" given it by the Butler family (S. Marcus Butler and Gladstone E. Butler being the then owner in 1945), or the earlier name "Richburn" given it by Joseph Richardson (who is said

to have built the Congressional Library and the Burke & Herbert Bank in Alexandria). Washurn was the maiden name of Mrs. Richardson—hence the combined syllables. We had noticed the location on the G. M. Hopkins map of “Mt. Erin—Sam. Pullman,” and were quite pleased to find we lived there. The story of Mt. Erin has an intriguing twist or two.

To the northeast of the dwelling is a memorial stone relating, “On this spot,” the death of two children of the Pullman family. There was no burial there, the bodies being interred in the cemetery at Sharon Chapel on the Beulah Road. The voting precinct until recent years was called “Pullman.” A portion of the property was once the “Mount Vernon Race Course.” A small plat in Deed Book G No. 3, shows the stables. The name was apparently given to the property by Thomas Tracy who bequeathed it to his nephew of Dublin, Ireland, “if he should become capable of inheriting property in the United States.” On March 15, 1831, as recorded in Acts of Assembly, 1830-1831, K 71 IV 84, page 303, “an Act was passed giving title to a tract of land containing about 360 acres, whereof James Francis Tracey, late of Fairfax County died seized, was released to and vested in Frances Maria Tracey, the widow of the said James Francis Tracey having died without heirs capable of inheriting the same . . . the said Frances Maria Tracey being now a resident of the said county, and having declared on oath according to law, her intention of becoming a citizen of the United States . . .”

The Mount Erin and Mount Comfort dwellings were of mid-victorian design, although there are definite indications that a portion of the Mount Erin dwelling was of an earlier date. Both command a view of the City of Washington, Alexandria, and the Maryland shore, with the Masonic Temple dominating the foreground, and a recently added view of the lights of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Each had a 15 x 30 feet drawing room and spacious entrance hall with walnut stair-rail and newel post. In the Mount Comfort house the stair went to the tower on the third floor, where there was a second room of the same size as the drawing room. Mount Erin was of brick, Mount Comfort of frame construction, but the Mount Comfort double front door was far more elaborate, having a rope design, which fell along with the stair-rails to vandals and thieves. We had hoped to restore the Mount Comfort dwelling, and it is my great regret that we have no photographs of the house.

Many more hours of research are necessary before all the available facts about these properties can be brought to light.

Pohick Church

*By The Reverend Albert N. Jones
Rector of Pohick Church*

The history of Pohick Church, located six miles from Mount Vernon at the intersection of U. S. Route 1 and Telegraph Road, traces back to the very early colonists in what is now Fairfax County and Northern Virginia. This place of worship, first established near Occoquan Creek in the late 17th century, became in 1732 the parish church of Truro Parish, created by the Virginia General Assembly of that year.

This church, presumably a wooden structure, was located some two miles southeast of the present church, but the exact site is not known. Among its vestrymen famous in history were George Washington, George Mason and George William Fairfax.

The old church deteriorated in the 1760s to the point where it was decided by the Vestry to erect a new building. The present site was selected largely at the urging of George Washington. George Mason and others wanted to build at the original location which was nearer to Gunston Hall. But General Washington carefully drew up a plat showing the location of all houses of the communicants and the roads leading to them. By that means, he showed the present location to be more centrally located for the parish as a whole. He won his point and the building was erected at its present location.

Construction plans were drawn by Washington and a contract was made with Daniel French to erect the new building on approximately three acres of land purchased from him. French began the work in 1769 but died before it was completed. George Mason took over the job of "undertaker," which was the 18th century term for a contractor. Services were first held in the new church in 1774.

The walls of the building as it stands today are original. The interior is a close reproduction of the original, recreated to replace the interior destroyed during the Civil War when the church was successively occupied by Confederate and Federal troops.

Throughout its history, Pohick has had its ups and downs. There have been dark periods when neglect, disuse and revolution

have threatened its very existence. But always, the congregation, sometimes only a valiant few—both lay and clergy—has held together enough of the elements of its former strength and guidance to keep it alive, and eventually forceful and vital.

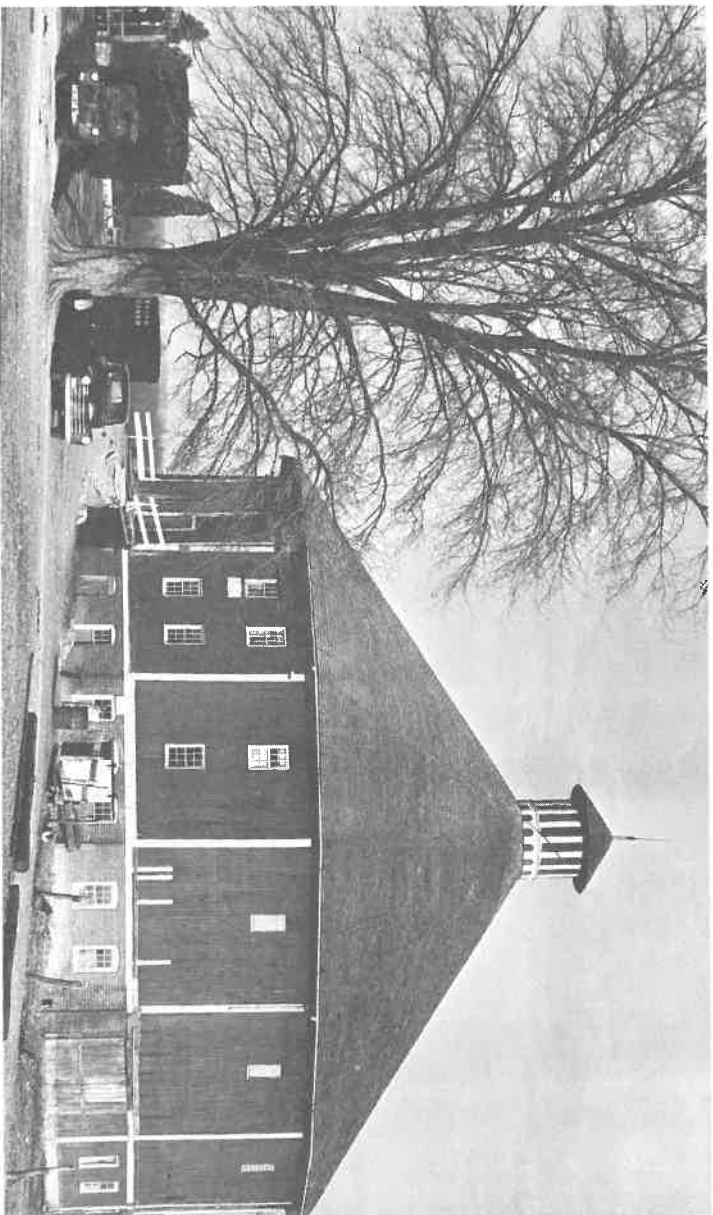
A monument to two centuries of faith, Pohick Church is still an active congregation of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia. Three services are held each Sunday. The doors are also open to visitors each day from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. The spirit and charm of the original church; its dignity and beauty are everywhere apparent. The strong religious convictions of George Washington, one of its builders and Vestrymen, is evident in his prayer quoted below:

“Almighty God: We make our earnest prayer that thou wilt keep the United States in thy holy protection; that thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large. And finally that thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the divine author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech thee, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.”



—(Picture courtesy The Washington Post)

Interior view of POHICK EPISCOPAL CHURCH, showing rectangular pews of the era. Vestrymen have included Washington, Mason, George William Fairfax and many other well-known persons through 200 years of existence.



—(Picture courtesy Mr. and Mrs. William M. Orr)

16-sided barn at Hayfield. This is not the famous barn built by General Washington, but was built by William E. Clarke sometime after Clarke purchased Hayfield in 1874.

Hayfield

As known to Marguerite Merigold

When my mother and I purchased the 175-acre remainder of the property known as Hayfield from the estate of Stanton R. Norman in 1953, we were given two pamphlets by his widow, Mrs. Katherine R. Norman and her co-executor, W. Gwynn Gardiner. After years of desultory research, I have been able to add very little to the information contained in those two small booklets. One reference indicates that George Washington "acquired Hayfield from the Ashfords in 1761. More research is needed before we could state this as a fact. At any rate, historians agree, and the records of Fairfax County bear them out, that about 1783, after the Revolutionary War was over, General Washington sold to Lund Washington, his cousin and manager of Mount Vernon Plantation for many years, 360 acres of the western section of his plantation. The land sold to Lund upon his retirement as manager of Mount Vernon Plantation was designated as Hayfield. Reports vary as to whether the dwelling was begun before or after the sale, but all agree that Hayfield was the dwelling occupied by Lund and his bride, Elizabeth Foote, who is said to have borne the same relation to George Washington as his cousin Lund, all having had the same great-great-grandfather. Historians disagree however, as to the details of the transaction between the General and Lund relative to the purchase of Hayfield.

Almost all the early maps of that section of Virginia show Hayfield as well as Mount Vernon. I have many times attempted to locate the Hayfield acres on the map of the "five farms" comprising Mount Vernon, which is generally shown in books and articles dealing with the land holdings of General Washington. My lack of success can be well understood in the light of information contained on page 127 of "George Washington, Farmer" by Paul Leland Haworth. He states that we are indebted to Washington's decision to lease "all except the Mansion House Farm" for the map drawn by him in 1793 and the elaborate description of the farm which accompanied his letter to Arthur Young, "the foremost scientific farmer of his day and editor of *Annals of Agriculture*." Hayfield does not appear on the 1793 map for the simple reason it had been sold to Lund in 1783. An examination of the conveyance to Lund as recorded among the Land Records of Fairfax County, might reveal the location and extent of the original farm, to which George Washington was

said to have added by purchases in 1762 and 1763. Some doubt appears to be cast upon the title to Hayfield Farm, according to the following letter shown on page 233 of "Letters and Recollections of George Washington" compiled by Tobias Lear:

"Mount Vernon, 24th Sept. 1797 (or 1791)

"To Mr. William Triplett.

Sir: I have examined my land papers, but find I possess none which relate to my purchase from Mr. Simon Peason all of them having been turned over, with my transfer to Mr. Lund Washington."

He continues the letter expressing disbelief as to the validity of any claim against the property.

Very little is known of either Lund or his wife, both apparently having had a propensity for destroying writings which might some day fall into unfriendly hands. In her "Journal" she refers to her intention of destroying memoranda made by her in the past; and according to Elswyth Thane in Potomac Squire (page 179) Lund destroyed most of the General's letters. This tendency was perhaps a part of the compatability of which she speaks several times.

The first pamphlet given us by Mrs. Norman was entitled "Elizabeth Washington of Hayfield," being a reprint of an article by William Buckner McGroarty published April 1925 in the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Volume 33, pages 154-165, and showing on page 160 photographs of the Hayfield property. Mr. McGroarty, who also wrote a short history of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House in Alexandria, was a gentleman and a scholar. To him, Elizabeth Washington "must have been a person of consequence and moral worth . . ." As might be expected, investigation has shown that his (George Washington's) "esteem and regard were worthily bestowed." Again he says, in speaking of Elizabeth's will, "a most interesting document, and one indicating a personality that leads to regret that more is not known of the life and works of this noble woman." Again he refers to the will's "sincere piety and nobility of sentiment."

Out of all the bits of history available, it would seem that each reader must, according to his own degree of piety, form his own opinion of the wife of Lund Washington. Those of historians do not agree. Contrasted with Mr. McGroarty's admiration of her character, is the statement by Moore, on page 131 of "Family

Life of Washington": "Because of an overplus of conventional religion she never quite fitted into the Mount Vernon family." On page 375 of "Potomac Squire" by Elswyth Thane, the entry from Washington's Diary 1798; "Lund's widow came over from Hayfield for the New Year" elicits the caustic comment by the historian, "doubtless ailing and dismal."

At any rate, Elizabeth Washington's own "Journal" (Mss. in Library of Congress, 1779-1796) contains several statements which may invite either sympathy for repressed anguish, or criticism of a nature little understood in her day or ours.

In 1779, before her marriage, she writes that she hopes her husband will not object to her religious inclinations. She also speaks in her journal of ill-treatment which she does not want to hand down and of her intention, therefore, to destroy memoranda made by her in the past.

In 1784, she writes, "... I do think there is not another man scarce to be found that would have suited me so well as my dear Mr. W . . ." I find confirmation of that statement in Lund Washington's letter to his employer, "... I never have and I hope never shall be happy when I do not do that which seems to give satisfaction." I even wonder if his wife helped him to compose that portion of his letter.

Again, in 1789, Elizabeth writes in her Journal, "... I had prayers in my family, night and morning—very constantly . . . but they do not seem fond of it—what is the cause I know not—human nature I believe is naturally averse to anything that is good." She complains that her servants do very little but says she does not scold or whip them.

In 1792, she writes that the family "think they commit a crime to join with me in prayer morning and evening," and further says, "Am satisfied there was nothing in my behaviour that causes them to dislike joining me in Prayer . . ." She says also that the servants hide at prayer time and are angry if made to come. She says she has not talked much of religion with her husband, and later expresses fears that her journal and books will be stolen by the servants when she dies.

In her will, she provides for education of poor girls.

The following information was quoted by Mr. McGroarty from Virginia Magazine of History, Vol. XXIII:

"Lund Washington was born 1737 and died 1796, married

his cousin Elizabeth Foote. Issue, two daughters who died very young, there having also been a child born dead."

In a letter from Lund to his employer dated December 11, 1782, he says, "Betty presents her very respectful compliments to you both. She was on Saturday night delivered of a dead child. She is now very well and I hope will continue so." Later letters refer to the illness and death of the other children.

Elizabeth bequeathed Hayfield to her "nephew and adopted son," William Hayward Foote, who in turn left everything to his wife "for as long as she remains my widow or for life . . . if, however, she should cease to be my widow or marry again, she must account for all these things and take her dower at law." And there follows one of the most often quoted and sometimes imitated statements from the wills of record in Fairfax County—"It is not my purpose to give any Cur a Sop." Whether the widow remarried, I am not informed, but some sixteen years later, her co-executor Francis L. Smith, as Commissioner, conveyed Hayfield Farm to Richard Windsor (Feb. 6, 1860, Liber C. No. 4, page 26).

In 1874, Richard Windsor sold Hayfield to William E. Clarke, who enlarged the farm to 814 acres. Mr. Clarke built a double-octagon, or sixteen-sided barn, apparently enlarging upon the plans of a barn built by General Washington in 1793, of which the General was very proud and described at length. The barn built by George Washington was situated in the vicinity of what is now known as Ingleside. It is not to be confused with Hayfield, even though Dogue Run was one of the original boundaries of Hayfield. Washington's barn is described in a number of books as well as in his writings, and a drawing thereof is also shown on page 54 of a publication in 1907, by the County Board of Supervisors entitled "Industrial and Historical Sketch of Fairfax County, Virginia."

In the barn built by Mr. Clarke at Hayfield, there were thirty-seven stalls, the side walls of which were topped by elaborate cast-iron ornaments in which the initials "W.E.C." were the central design. These dividers were in place at the time we purchased the farm, but were stolen, broken up and sold as junk by one of our employees. Fortunately, one escaped destruction; it is in my possession and, I hope, will be mended and preserved along with the old wash-pot and its oven, and the old brick creamery house. These are all that remain of the original buildings. The "round" barn built by Mr. Clarke still remains. Obviously it is old but has not yet reached the 100-year mark.

By deed recorded in 1906 in Liber T No. 6, page 456, of the Land Records of Fairfax County, the widow of William E. Clarke conveyed Hayfield to Joseph R. Atkinson, unmarried. While still unmarried, Atkinson executed a deed of trust which was foreclosed and the property sold to J. M. Duncan, but, for some unknown reason, the deed was not recorded until July 17, 1918. The dwelling later was destroyed by fire. After the fire, the property was conveyed to Hayfield Farm Company, Inc., June 17, 1918, by deed recorded in Liber H No. 8, page 435.

It is known that the boxwood was sold and that a portion of it is thriving in the Bishop's Garden at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., said to have been purchased by Mrs. Woodrow Wilson as a gift for the garden.

The story of the boxwood is continued in a pamphlet dated May 6, 1925, entitled "Washington's Historic Hayfield Boxwood," copyrighted by Amawalk Nursery, Inc., Amawalk, N.Y. in that year. I unearthed that pamphlet while following my pet theory that "a little ignorance can be very helpful" in locating information not discovered by more learned researchers who know just where to look. I am told that the nursery is out of existence, and the copyright has expired; therefore I quote:

"Little is left today of the original character of Hayfield Plantation. The old Manor house and slave quarters burned down ten years ago, leaving the walls of enduring brick standing in majestic ruin in the midst of the finest formal boxwood garden that remained in the State of Virginia. The boxwood has endured all the vicissitudes of time."

... "Since 1761, it has gained so much in size and in quantity that more was available at Hayfield than has been required to reproduce the original formal garden. Some of it is now planted around the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul at Washington where lies the body of our great wartime President, Woodrow Wilson, and to which later was moved the body of Admiral George Dewey. Some of it, too, may be planted in the landscaping of the National Masonic Memorial."

During the tenure of Mr. S. R. Norman, the handmade bricks remaining in the walls were sold by the hundred to eager lovers of such antiques. For some years before and after the purchase by us, the barn and fields were the location of the Junior Equita-

tion School founded by Mrs. William Dillon. A drawing of the barn adorned her letterhead, and a charming article about her school appeared in a customers' magazine published by Woodward & Lothrop, Inc., of Washington, D.C.

Mr. Norman published a descriptive brochure containing views of the barn, fields and gateway, in which he says, "The Soil is known as Susquehanna loam which responds readily to treatment." In part, the brochure reads:

"The Mansion house was destroyed by fire about the year 1917. The original foundation is still intact. Another ten-room residence was destroyed by fire in the early part of 1936 . . . The large barn in good condition on the south end of the farm is said to have cost \$30,000. It is round or double-octagon shape; first story is brick and contains 37 horse stalls; large double-door entrances; the upper part has capacity for 400 tons of hay; 250-ton silo in the center—extending from the basement to near the roof; there is a stairway leading from the main floor to cupola. Entire barn is equipped with gutter and downspouts. . . . The old brick creamery house built by Washington still stands, with large wood-shed attached."

There is a large spring piped about 500 feet to the barn and hog run. Fine clear water flows by gravity about 20 gallons per minute. Near where the old mansion house stood there is a good bricked-in well about 50 feet deep and containing more than 30 feet of water at all times. One of the quaint old landmarks remaining on the place is a 100-gallon pot set up over a bricked-in oven used in pre-war days. The owner has refused \$1000.00 for this pot.

Records reveal that this entire farm was purchased by George Washington in the years 1761-1762 and became a part of his Mount Vernon Estate and remained in his family many years.

In 1954, my mother and I sold the property to W. S. Banks and W. M. Orr. There, they proceeded to develop a herd of Charolais cattle until 1963, when the property was sold to Wills & Van Metre.

At long last, those lovely fields across which soft breezes never fail to blow, will become the setting for new homes where we can only hope that the past will never be quite forgotten.

Woodlawn

(Compiled from Woodlawn Plantation Brochure)

By Pearl Thompson

George Washington noted in his diary on February 22, 1799 (his last birthday): "Miss Custis was married abt Candle light to Mr. Lawe. Lewis."

And at this point the history of Woodlawn Plantation begins, for it was part of his marriage settlement upon his foster daughter, Eleanor Parke Custis, and his favorite nephew, Major Lawrence Lewis.

Eleanor (called Nelly) was born at Abingdon on the Potomac March 31, 1779, to Eleanor Calvert and John Parke Custis, Martha Washington's son by her first husband. Before she was three years old Nelly's father had died of a fever contracted at the Siege of Yorktown.

General Washington had married Nelly's grandmother, Martha (Dandridge) Custis, in 1759. They sent for Nelly and her younger brother, George Washington Parke Custis, and adopted them into the busy life at Mount Vernon. Despite the exigencies of leading the Continental Army to victory in the War for American Independence and later serving as a new nation's first president, Washington assumed the management of the children's estate. He not only saw that they were supplied with all necessities for children in their position in life, but his letters to Philadelphia tradesmen requested toys, books, quadrille boxes, pocket books, handkerchiefs, a whirligig, a locket (for Nelly), a fiddle (for tiny George), music, and a harpsichord.

Their education under tutors and in good schools in New York and Philadelphia included also careful training in the genteel accomplishments regarded as essential in the polite society which surrounded them. For many of these accomplishments, which were so frequently admired by visitors to Mount Vernon and later to her own model establishment at Woodlawn, Nelly was indebted to the skillful and affectionate direction of her grandmother.

The two foster children moved through one of the most brilliant epochs in the history of their country. They attended the glittering Inauguration Ball festivities on May 7, 1789, which followed the solemn inaugural of George Washington as first president of the United States. After his retirement from public office

to the private life of a Virginia gentleman, the General found he was still devoting a large part of his life to the endless entertainment of throngs of visitors.

In 1797, to relieve himself in part of this vast burden of hospitality, he invited his nephew Lawrence Lewis to assist him as secretary and host. Lawrence, son of Washington's sister, Betty, and Fielding Lewis, was born at Kenmore in Fredericksburg on April 4, 1767, and had been pursuing a military career.

After the marriage of Nelly Custis and Lawrence Lewis, the General took immediate measures to provide for their future. He proposed to set aside 2000 acres of his Mount Vernon lands, including part of Dogue Run Farm, a grist mill and distillery, for their use, to be inherited at his death. He urged them to start building at once, while remaining in residence at Mount Vernon.

Before the building could be started, George Washington died, and to Lawrence Lewis as one of his executors fell the responsibility of carrying out the General's last wishes, which included instruction to replace the old family tomb with a new burial vault. Two children, Frances Parke and Martha Betty, were born to Nelly and Lawrence at Mount Vernon during the years the Lewises remained with the widowed Mrs. Washington.

Dr. William Thornton was chosen as architect for the mansion for several reasons. He and Mrs. Thornton had been intimate in the Washington family circle, and he had designed two town houses for Washington in the new federal city. This talented amateur, in competition with those more professionally trained, had won the commission for a design for the United States Capitol. Dr. Thornton, who had received a medical degree from the the University of Edinburgh, was described by William Dunlap, art historian, as "a scholar and a gentleman—full of talent and eccentricity—a Quaker by profession, a painter, a poet, and a horse-racer, well acquainted with the mechanic arts . . . his company was a complete antidote to dullness."

Thornton's first move was to go with Lewis on March 18, 1800 to Gray's Hill to stake out the site. Great care was taken in marking trees to be cleared for the building and vista to Mount Vernon, and for the fine old forest trees that were to be saved.

Eight children were born to the Lewises, but it was Nelly's tragedy that her husband, and all but one child predeceased her. Woodlawn was a happy place for children, with its gardens, woods, and streams, and the children responded warmly to its appeal.



—(Picture courtesy Miss Mayme Parker)

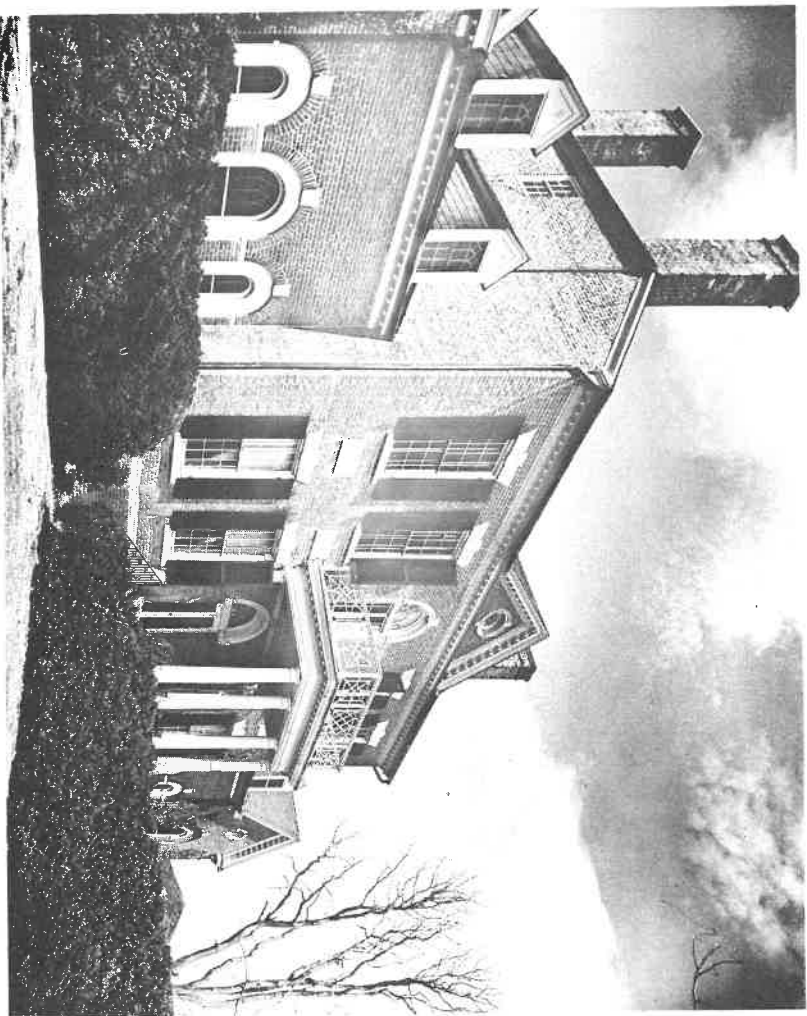
ABINGTON, birthplace of Nellie Custis, stood where the Officers' Club at the National Airport now stands. It was vacant for many years and finally was demolished in the early 1930's to make way for the Airport. The old well by the side of the Club is all that now remains.



—(Picture courtesy National Trust for Historic Preservation)

Oldest known photograph of WOODLAWN, showing hyphens and dependencies before renovation and alteration.

WOODLAWN,
after restoration
and
certain alterations.



—(Picture courtesy National Trust for Historic Preservation)

Their own letters and those of visitors describe the life in this cultivated and quiet society which modeled itself on the precepts of Mount Vernon.

Most warmly welcomed of the General's old friends and companions in arms was the aged Marquis de Lafayette, who in 1824 was making a triumphal tour of a grateful young nation. He came to pay his respects to "Miss Nelly," whom he had known as the child of Mount Vernon. She was now the mistress of her own great establishment, but of her family of eight children only three were living to greet the great man and his son, George Washington Motier de Lafayette, on the occasion. The visit is recorded in a faded lithograph that now hangs at Woodlawn, along with other gifts and memorabilia of Lafayette.

Parke, the eldest daughter, "elegant and accomplished" was the first bride to be married at Woodlawn. She married an army officer, Edward George Washington Butler, in 1826. Her brother, Lorenzo, attended Yale College and later studied law with James Gibson, the husband of her mother's childhood friend in Philadelphia.

Lorenzo married Esther Maria Coxe in Philadelphia and brought her to Woodlawn to live while he developed his own plantation, Audley, in nearby Clarke County. They had six sons who brightened their grandmother's lonely last years.

Angelia married in 1835 and went to live in Louisiana, where two sons were born. On September 21, 1839, she died at Pass Christian, Mississippi, and later was reburied at Mount Vernon. Nelly now had but two surviving children, Parke and Lorenzo, and as a culminating blow, their father died at Arlington that same November and was buried in the family vault at Mount Vernon. The title to Woodlawn Plantation passed to Lorenzo, whom Nelly joined at Audley.

Weeds grew in the garden, honeysuckle choked the boxwood and rose gardens, shutters flapped in the wind, owls and bats flew in and out through broken windows, and swifts nested in the massive chimneys. Bringing an era to a close was an announcement in the Alexandria Gazette in 1846 offering Woodlawn at public sale.

A group of Quakers from West Jersey and Philadelphia acquired the property in August, and in 1848 deeded it to Jacob Troth, one of their company. The forest and great trees were cut down to be sold for cordwood and ships' timbers, and the land was

divided into small farms. Lorenzo Lewis died at Audley in 1847 before the Troth-Gillingham Company completed this change. The years before her death Eleanor Parke Lewis wrote to her friend and confidante, Elizabeth Bordley Gibson, of a visit made about 1851, "I do not forget your welcome visit to my sweet home, but you could not recognize it now—I went to see it when last in Alexa—all the trees, the hedge, the flower knot, my precious Agnes's Grove, the tall pine Washington, all gone, in front a few trees and vines, but sweet recollections 'linger there still'—"

The Troths, and their fellow settlers' financially successful ventures, were operated with free labor; some of the liberated Washington family slaves became homeowners in the area. The Mansion was used as temporary quarters by new settlers and their families, and was for many years a Troth family residence.

As the century drew to a close, Woodlawn was again desolate. W. H. Snowden commented on the irony of a magnificent building constructed of the best materials, which its builders had a right to believe would endure for centuries, becoming deleict only 97 years after its foundations were laid..

Paul Kester, successful playwright, and his brother Vaughan, the novelist, came at this desperate juncture, and both literally and figuratively turned on the lights in the long-dark house. It was during their occupancy that the hyphens and wings were raised to the present height.

In 1905 Miss Elizabeth M. Sharpe bought the house and made extensive alterations, installing modern plumbing and lighting. The last private owners were Senator and Mrs. Oscar W. Underwood of Alabama, who installed modern heating and developed the planting and boxwood gardens. Official Washington was hospitably entertained at Woodlawn. After his death, in 1929, the Assistant Secretary of War Harry H. Woodring and his bride, rented the Mansion for several years.

When the Mansion was offered for sale in 1948, a group of public-spirited citizens organized a non-profit corporation, Woodlawn Public Foundation, to raise funds to purchase it and preserve it for the American public. This group was a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and in 1951 its Trustees decided that the best interests of the American public would be served if it were administered by the Trust. Title to the property was officially turned over to the National Trust in 1957. In 1953, The Garden Club of Virginia began a restoration of the garden and grounds.

Fort Hunt

By Robert T. Nelson

Settlers in the Little Hunting Creek vicinity built a fort on the Potomac River as early as 1676 for protection against the Indians of the Susquehannock Tribe. Years later, the War Department, desiring to establish a coastal defense fortification for the protection of the Nation's Capital, decided to locate a fort in this same area, eleven and one-half miles south of Washington, D.C. The land purchased for the site of the fort, to be known as Fort Hunt, was just across Little Hunting Creek from the Mount Vernon Mansion and was once a part of the River Farm, one of five farms owned by George Washington and forming part of the enlarged Mount Vernon Estate.

The United States acquired ninety acres at Sheridan's Point (known as the "Pelton" tract) from the State of Virginia by act of cession on February 29, 1892. On July 7, 1903 the United States condemned and purchased one hundred five acres of adjacent land (the "Grau" tract) from John Miller of Fairfax County and on October 11, 1906, another portion of 1.633 acres. On June 1, 1906, F. G. Percival deeded to the United States the right-of-way to the nearby county road, over a strip of land 30 feet wide lying along the north line of the adjacent Linton estate for a distance of 1152 feet. The purchase price for the total 197.413 acres was \$45,526.

In 1897, contract laborers began the construction of concrete emplacements of a battery for three 8-inch, breech-loading disappearing rifles. A small detachment of troops guarded the installation and lived in tents, no permanent quarters being completed until 1899.

In consequence of the war with Spain, the War Department ordered a garrison of 48 troops of Company "K," Fourth Coast Artillery, commanded by Capt. Kenneth H. Walker to the fort on March 13, 1898, prior to the completion of the battery by the contractors.

On April 13, 1899, President McKinley designated the area at Sheridan's Point as Fort Hunt, in honor of the late Colonel and Brevet Major-General Henry J. Hunt, United States Army. General Hunt, an artillery officer with a distinguished record of service, participated, with many others, in the battles of Chapultepec during the Mexican War, and served as Chief of Artillery at the battles

of Fredericksburg and Gettysburg during the Civil War. He was well known as an artillery expert, and wrote several books, one of which served as a text during the Civil War. He was garrisoned at Fort McHenry, Maryland, from 1848 to 1849, and at Fort Monroe, Virginia, from 1849 to 1853. Upon his retirement, and prior to his death on February 11, 1889, General Hunt became Commander of the Old Soldiers' Home at Washington, D.C.

The armament of the fort, when completed in January 1904, consisted of the Mount Vernon Battery of three 8-inch rifles; Battery Sater with three 3-inch rapid fire guns; and Batteries Porter and Robinson, each of which mounted a 5-inch rapid fire gun. By direction of President Theodore Roosevelt on May 25, 1903, these batteries had been named in honor of the following men: Battery Robinson, in honor of 1st Lt. Levi H. Robinson, 14th U. S. Infantry, who was killed February 9, 1874, in action with Indians near Laramie Peak, Wyoming; Battery Porter, in honor of 1st Lt. James E. Porter, 7th U. S. Cavalry, who was killed June 25, 1876, in action with Sioux Indians at Little Big Horn River, Montana; and Battery Sater, in honor of 1st Lt. William A. Sater, 18th U. S. Infantry, who was killed July 1, 1898, at the battle of San Juan, Cuba.

The gun emplacements, stone and concrete pits banked with sod, were about 100 feet lower than those of Fort Washington, just across the river in Maryland. The firing system remained inefficient until the addition, in 1905, of a primary range-finding station, a fire-control system, a 60-inch searchlight, a tide observing station, and an electric lighting plant. The fort never contained more than one company of 109 men. In 1899, the fort had installed an artesian well and a steam pumping station, a sewerage system draining into the Potomac River, a hot-air system for the hospital only, and by 1900 had constructed 26 buildings. Freight which was brought to the fort daily except Sundays, came from Washington, D. C., via the Randall Shipping Line on the Potomac River.

Garrison life was uneventful except for changes in command; however, the troops did participate in several interesting events. On December 7, 1900, the Secretary of War, Elihu Root, ordered the men of the 4th Coast Artillery Company to Washington, D. C., to provide an escort for President McKinley and the state governors at the Centennial Celebration of the establishment of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia. Less than a year later, on September 17, 1901, the garrison participated in the funeral cortege of President McKinley.

The succeeding years were uneventful. During the First

World War, the War Department declared the fort superfluous for the protection of the Capital, because other defense points had been constructed. The guns were dismantled during 1917 and 1918 and transferred to other forts, but a small garrison remained. The War Department established a Finance School at the now obsolete fort in 1921, and by 1923, the garrison of the post consisted of but two officers and eight men of the 47th Company (that had garrisoned the fort since 1900), two officers and men of the Finance School faculty, and two Ordnance men.

A study of harbor defenses of the United States by the War Plans Division during April of 1923 approved the abandonment of Fort Hunt and the removal of the Finance School to Washington, D. C., for reasons of economy. On July 3, 1923, the personnel other than that of the Finance School moved to Fort Washington, and the War Department transferred the ungarrisoned post to the jurisdiction of the Quartermaster General. The cost to the Government of the fort from 1897 up to June 30, 1922, amounted to \$309,725.55.

The War Department considered requests of several agencies for the use of the old post. The City of Alexandria, the District Commissioners of the District of Columbia, the National Guard of the District of Columbia, the Roosevelt Military Academy, and Henry C. Wallace, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture desired the grounds for various purposes. Congress, however, did not permit the transferral of the fort to surplus property; therefore the War Department retained jurisdiction.

The Military District of Washington passed to the control of the 3d Corps Area on September 7, 1927, and the Headquarters Signal Company of the 16th Brigade, stationed at Fort Howard, Maryland, transferred to Fort Hunt for permanent station. Upon being re-garrisoned January 20, 1928, as a military reservation, Fort Hunt became a sub-post of Fort Humphreys (now Fort Belvoir), Virginia, for supply and medical purposes.

Under Act of Congress approved May 23, 1928 (45 Stat., 721), as amended by Act of Congress approved January 23, 1930 (46 Stat., 59), the Secretary of War approved the location of the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway through the reservation and granted to the Secretary of Agriculture permission to use and occupy two tracts of land contiguous to said Parkway for purposes of beautifying the area.

The Seventy-first Congress passed Public Law 284 on May 29, 1930, that gave Secretary of War John B. Shuman the authority to transfer the jurisdiction of Fort Hunt to the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital. The

fort was to be administered and maintained by the Director, Lt. Col. U. S. Grant, 3d, as a part of the George Washington Memorial Highway.

The War Department, on May 21, 1931, listed Fort Hunt as one of several reservations for disposal and directed the Commander of the 3d Corps Area to expedite the transfer of the elements of the 16th Brigade stationed there. The Assistant Adjutant General, Robert H. Dunlop, notified the Adjutant General October 27, 1931, that the post was no longer required for military purposes and had been abandoned. The Headquarters and Headquarters Company was reduced to the Commanding General, executive aides, and five enlisted men, their transfer to be effective on completion of the current training period.

On June 1, 1932, Lt. Col. Grant gave permission to a colored Reserve Officers Training Corps unit of 38 men to begin training at the post, but because of the emergency resulting from the large number of unemployed veterans—the “Bonus Marchers”—in Washington, D.C., at the time, the Secretary of War, acting on the suggestion of the Chief of Staff, General Douglas MacArthur, transferred on June 15 the buildings at Fort Hunt to the Veterans’ Administration for hospital purposes. On July 21, 1932, the War Department suspended the R.O.T.C. activities, while the hospital for indigent veterans continued to receive patients up until July 31. All patients were evacuated by August 5, and the hospital officially closed August 12. Assistant Secretary of War L. H. Payne declared the emergency to be over, the Veterans Administration returned jurisdiction of Fort Hunt to the War Department on August 18, and they in turn transferred it under terms of the original permit to the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks. The Fort Hunt area was now to be known as a portion of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, United States Reservation 404 (Virginia).

While construction continued on the Memorial Highway, the Parks Division gave temporary permission to colored Reserve Officers Training Corps and Civilian Military Training Corps units for the use of the reservation for summer training.

Civilian Conservation Corps Camp No. NP-6, designated War Department initial Camp No. 2387, began project operations on October 13, 1933. The personnel of this camp developed Fort Hunt as a recreation area with picnic grounds and camping facilities, repaired the old sea-walls, and landscaped the Memorial Highway. A museum laboratory with six to eight technicians and about 20 C.C.C. trainees was established at Fort Hunt by the National Park Service from November 1933 to November 1938. Ex-

hibits and models were constructed by the laboratory for various eastern parks.

The activities of the C.C.C. camp attracted much interest. Anthony Eden, former Foreign Minister of Great Britain, visited the camp in December of 1938, and evinced such interest that Camp Superintendent Charles Watson sent to him a copy of the plan for the conversion of the Fort Hunt area to recreational usage.

Fort Hunt again received national mention when the King and Queen of Great Britain visited the camp during June of 1939. The Headquarters Washington Provisional Brigade was called upon to furnish troops to assist in holding traffic from the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway and unauthorized persons from Mount Vernon and Fort Hunt during their visit. The King and Queen, accompanied by the President and Mrs. Roosevelt, arrived on June 9. The King alone inspected the 187 C.C.C. boys accompanied by Charles Watson, Project Superintendent of the Camp; Capt. Blair Henderson, Commander; and Robert Fechner, C.C.C. Director. Arthur Demaray, Associate Director of the National Park Service, accompanied Mrs. Roosevelt, while the Queen and the President remained in their cars. The King showed interest in the activities of the camp and asked detailed questions about the cuisine and training of the camp directors. He also carefully viewed photographic exhibits depicting the work of the camp.

On September 20, 1939, the National Park Service approved the occupation of the old hospital building by one officer and 26 men of the 2d Signal Service Company to be used as a monitoring station. This company shared the facilities of the C.C.C. camp.

The activities of the C.C.C. camp ceased on May 25, 1942, although side camps operated from this site while working at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. The War Department designated this unit as a "defense" camp on October 22, 1941, under new number NP (D) 6-Virginia, later changed to Camp Belvoir, NP (D) 6-Virginia, although still remaining at Fort Hunt.

The Secretary of the Interior approved the transfer of Fort Hunt back to the Army under Special Use Permit dated May 15, 1942, stipulating, however, that such activities should cease one year after the termination of the war.

The facilities of the post were expanded by the War Department during the war period, when 150 buildings were constructed to house a large number of troops engaged in secret operations of which the public knew nothing. The joint intelligence activities of the War and Navy Departments at Fort Hunt were identified

only as the Intelligence Division, P.O. Box 1142, Alexandria, Virginia.

In 1943, the War Department listed the fort as a Class I Installation, the entire area being under the jurisdiction of the Military District of Washington except for the old powder magazines and gun emplacements used by the National Archives for storing nitrate films. On June 3, 1946, the Acting Secretary of the Interior, Oscar L. Chapman, requested of Robert R. Patterson, the Secretary of War, the return of the reservation as specified in the Special Use Permit. Col. Albert Burton, Chief of the Corps of Engineers and Director of Real Estate, asked permission of the War Department General Staff to continue their secret intelligence activities on a restricted 30-acre portion of the reservation. The Director of Intelligence then indicated in August 1946 that termination of the joint intelligence activities could not be expected until the 30th of June, 1947. However, the War Department decided to move the Intelligence Division to Mitchell Field, New York, whereupon evacuation of troops began the 31st of October, 1946, except for a small security detachment which remained to guard the "classified" area. The War Department declared the fort surplus property on November 15, and the last troops left on the 23rd of November, 1946. The Commissioner of the Military District of Washington, Col. D. T. White, then assumed custody of the fort on an intermediary basis besides maintaining a fire department and security troop to guard the classified area until provision was made for transferral of the fort to the Department of the Interior.

In January 1948, the Museum Division of the National Park Service moved the laboratory from the Ford Theater Building to Fort Hunt. Exhibits and dioramas for the museums at the Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia, and the Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, North Carolina, were partially completed here. Before the removal of the laboratory to Washington, D.C., in September of 1948, this unit also worked on projects for the Atomic Energy Commission.

Col. White relinquished control of the reservation to the Department of the Interior and U. S. Park Police replaced the guards and fire department which was removed by the War Department on June 30, 1948.

Now administered by the National Park Service, Fort Hunt is essentially a recreational site, serving people of Alexandria, Virginia, and Washington, D. C., as well as visitors to Mount Vernon. There are large picnic areas equipped with drinking fountains, fireplaces and play fields.

The Quakers Come to Woodlawn

By Horace D. Buckman

At the time of the death of George Washington, the Mount Vernon Farms were in a high state of cultivation. Washington had been not only a great statesman, but also a very good farmer. As so often happens, however, when the strong leader is lost to an enterprise, deterioration soon sets in. This occurred at the Mt. Vernon and later at the Woodlawn plantation. The once well-kept fields were overgrown with weeds and bushes. Mt. Vernon was lived in, but in poor repair. Woodlawn Mansion in the 1840's was vacant, the Lewis heirs having moved to near Winchester. No one was on the place except a few former slaves. It was this situation that met the Quakers when they came to the Woodlawn area.

The coming of the members of the Religious Society of Friends to this section was the result, mainly, of two factors. About 1845 there was a great demand for hardwood timber by the shipyards of New England. The supply of suitable lumber was being rapidly exhausted in the north and new sources were eagerly sought. The second reason for the Quaker settlement was the belief, on the part of these people, that all men were equally children of God and, as such, should be free. Therefore, it was desired to found a colony with no slave labor, to demonstrate that such a venture would be economically sound as well as ethically right.

In 1845, to implement the above intent, a Philadelphia company, composed of five Friends, sent timber scouts to search for hardwood forests and for suitable land for a planned community, to be colonized and run on Quaker principles. These scouts explored the Tidewater section of Virginia from Norfolk to Alexandria and found the most promising area to be on the Washington estate, at Woodlawn.

I quote from their report: "We were pleased with a part of the Mt. Vernon property, belonging to Lorenzo Lewis, a grand nephew of G. Washington, in Fairfax Co., Va., 14 miles from Washington and seven from Alexandria, containing 2000 acres of beautiful valley land and a large mansion built of brick and completely furnished, and including 1000 acres of timber, mostly oak, and for which they asked 12½ dollars an acre . . ."

The purchase of the 2000-acre tract, mentioned in the report, plus 1000 acres of the Washington estate, was completed in 1846.

That same year the first settlers moved to Woodlawn Mansion. The acreage was surveyed and divided into farms of from 80 to 200 acres each.

From that time on a steady influx of settlers came to the community, practically all of them Friends from New Jersey and Pennsylvania—and there were no slaves.

The area prospered and in 1848 a Friends Meeting was started in one of the rooms of Woodlawn Mansion. This was called an "Indulged Meeting," under the care of the Meeting in Alexandria. In 1849 the Meeting moved to the millers' cottage at Washington Mill on Dogue Creek and at this time a school was started there. The Meeting and school soon outgrew their cramped quarters and in 1851 were moved to an addition built onto the dwelling house at Gray's Hill Farm. Finally, in 1853, one-half of the present Meeting House was constructed and the School transferred to Accotink. The Friends operated the Accotink School until the public school system was established by the county.

The first death in the membership occurred in 1854 and a graveyard was established on the Meeting House property. The stones in this cemetery bear the family names of practically all of the early settlers.

The Woodlawn community continued to grow and prosper. Accotink developed into a village of some size and became the economic center with a sawmill, grist mill and store.

Accotink Creek at that time was large enough to accommodate coastal sailing vessels, and the lumber and flour from the mills were shipped north by boat, where they enjoyed a ready sale.

This idyllic state came to an end however, with the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. Woodlawn was a no-man's-land, between the Federal lines just south of Alexandria, and the Confederate troops, stationed a few miles to the south. The pickets from both armies overran the area, and the settlers lost their crops, livestock, fences, and sometimes even their barns and houses, to the marauding soldiers of both armies. The Friends, being by religious conviction both abolitionists and pacifists, could support neither side in the conflict, and so were given scant consideration. The Meeting House was used as a headquarters for northern pickets during most of the war, but, with one or two exceptions, meetings were held each "First Day." The following is from a diary left by a member:

"4-23-1861 Attended Pope Creek (Md) Quarterly Meeting. Returned to Woodlawn with family, finding Alexandria in possession of Federal troops. Soon after, the lines were extended as far south as the Meeting House.

"7-21-61 All day long we heard distinctly the roar of cannon. All the time we sat in Meeting we heard the noise and roar of battle (The battle of Bull Run).

"9-61 We can go but a few miles either north or south without coming to the lines strictly guarded by pickets. At this time we are unable to get two miles without an armed guard to conduct us to the next post, and so on into Alexandria.

"12-1-61 To Meeting. House filled with soldiers and guns. They behaved themselves orderly and had a quiet, comfortable time. I had considerable to say to them by way of testimony.

"2- -1862 The soldiers make our Meeting House their headquarters and attend our Meetings, which are regularly kept up in the Meeting House on 1st days. I am not aware that any of our Meetings have been dropped except once or twice last spring when we were kept from Meeting by the interference of Southern troops."

The war finally ended. About 1866 the size of the Meeting House was doubled. The Woodlawn community became a pleasant, prosperous farming section and the Meeting flourished. This was the situation until the 1st World War and the second invasion by the armed forces. Fort Belvoir was established in the area, and some of the members had their homes taken over by the military reservation.

When the war ended and the Meeting could catch its breath and take stock it found most of its members had moved away. It struggled on for a few years, then regular Meetings were discontinued, though the Meeting was never "laid down."

Came the Second World War and a further expansion of Fort Belvoir. The Meeting House is now completely surrounded by the bustling Army post. At this time there is a resurgence of interest in the old Meeting, and religious services are held on a once-a-month basis. It is planned that in the near future, weekly services will be re-established. Meanwhile, the small, plain, white frame building stands serene in its shady green plot of lawn, a quiet testimony to a belief in peace and love as a way of life.

Union Farm

By Major General (Ret.) James F. and Marcella L. Phillips

The small estate presently known as Union Farm is located one and one-half miles west-northwest of Mount Vernon. The residence is at the end of Union Farm Lane, which takes off from Old Mill Road, used by George Washington when traveling to and from his Mansion House and his Grist Mill on Dogue Creek.

In 1956 an exhaustive title search of the successive owners of the present area of Union Farm was made and the results recorded on a bronze plaque, placed on a large stone in front of Union Farm House. The history reads as follows:

THIS MOUNTING BLOCK
RESTS ON
UNION FARM
WHICH LAND WAS ONCE THE
PROPERTY OF THOSE WHOSE NAMES
ARE HERE RECORDED

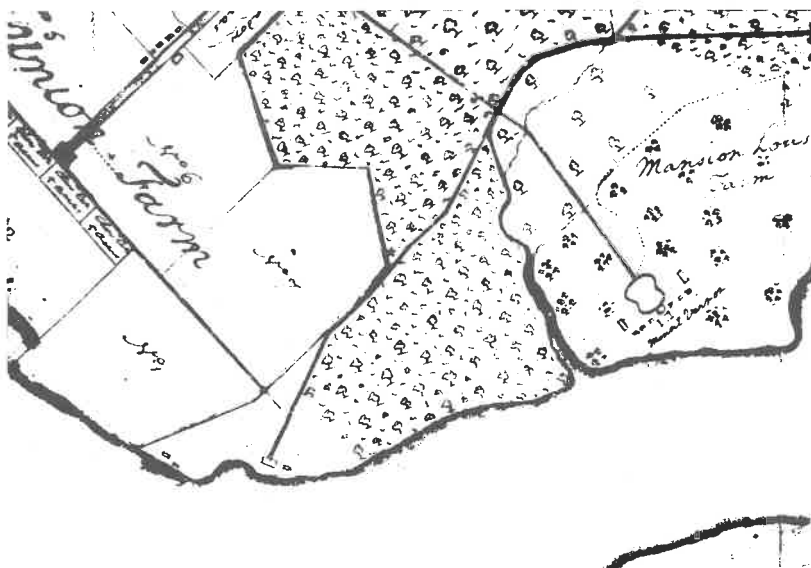
CHARLES II, KING OF ENGLAND	-1649
THOMAS, LORD CULPEPER	1649-1674
COLONEL JOHN WASHINGTON (Great Grandfather of G.W.)	1674-1677
LAWRENCE WASHINGTON (Grandfather of G.W.)	1677-1698
MILDRED WASHINGTON (Aunt of G.W.)	1698-1726
AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON (Father of G.W.)	1726-1743
LAWRENCE WASHINGTON (Brother of G.W.)	1743-1752
GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON	1752-1799
BUSHROD WASHINGTON and WIFE (Nephew of G.W.)	1799-1831
GEORGE C. and ANN T. WASHINGTON (Nephew of B.W.)	1831-1832
SAMUEL and LYDIA WHITALL	1832-1849
CHARLES and SARAH GILLINGHAM	1849-1855
DAVID and JEMIMA ANN WALTON	1855-1857
JOHN BALLINGER and FAMILY	1857-1900
ELIZABETH E. and DANIEL D. THOMPSON	1900-1915
FANNIE L. and A. W. CAMPBELL	1915-1917
SENATOR MOSES CLAPP and FAMILY	1917-1945
WALLACE K. and VIRGINIA G. MAGRUDER	1945-1949
MAJOR GENERAL JAMES F. and MARCELLA L. PHILLIPS	1949-

EDITOR'S NOTE: The original 5,000 acres, known as Hunting Creek Plantation and later as Mount Vernon, was patented jointly by John Washington (great grandfather of George Washington) and Nicholas Spencer. After Spencer's death the tract was divided, in 1690, Washington keeping the portion facing Little Hunting Creek, while the portion facing Dogue Run went to the Spencer heirs and in turn was further divided. After George Washington became owner of the Mansion Farm in his own name, he bought the adjoining properties that had passed to the Spencer heirs and called these "Union Farm." After his death in 1799 and the death of his wife, Martha, in 1802 the land again was divided into smaller tracts for the Washington heirs, of whom there were more than thirty.



—(Picture courtesy Horace D. Buckman)

"Friends" Meeting House, built soon after the Quakers arrived and still in regular use.



—(Picture courtesy Major General James F. Phillips, Ret.)

Portion of George Washington's Plat, showing location of Union Farm.



—(Picture courtesy Major General James F. Phillips, Ret.)

View of Union Farm house before renovation.



—(Picture courtesy Major General James F. Phillips, Ret.)

Union Farm house as it appears today.

THE NAME: UNION FARM

Visible emotional disturbances are exhibited by numbers of Southerners when they first learn that this home in Virginia is named "Union" Farm. Either by forthright, or discreet, comment they indicate their supposition that some "Northern Carpetbagger" so named it. Such is far from the case.

In 1769 George Washington bought a strip of land, along the Potomac River and west of Mount Vernon, from Captain John Posey. This land included the Virginia terminus of a ferry which had been authorized by the General Assembly, in 1745, to ply between Captain Posey's house, "Rover's Delight," and the land of John Marshall, in Maryland. The landing at Rover's Delight was known in the neighborhood as "Ferry Landing." Washington also acquired the neighboring land from the Widow French and said, "Let this (combined) plantation henceforth be called 'Union Farm or Plantation' instead of Ferry or French's." He may have incorporated into this Union Farm some portion of his inherited land, where the present house stands. On this northern portion of Union Farm was located a small house and quarters for fifty slaves, as shown on George Washington's map of his Mount Vernon Estate, drawn by him in 1793. In 1792 George Washington had built a large 16-sided barn about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile southwest of these buildings. This he described as "equal perhaps to any in America." It is known that since 1857, when John Ballinger built the present house, its site and adjacent area has been called Union Farm (Potomac Interlude by Dorothy Troth Muir).

THE BUILDING OF THE HOUSE

The present house of Union Farm was built by John Ballinger in 1857. He was one of a considerable number of Quakers who emigrated from New Jersey to the Mount Vernon-Woodlawn area during 1846 to 1856. Initially interested in the harvesting of timber from the land for building of ships near Camden, New Jersey, these thrifty, well-to-do Quakers were quick to see the advantage of buying homesites for themselves in this once prosperous Virginia area which had fared so badly following the death of George and Martha Washington. Commerce with England had declined following the Revolution, causing a period of depression, and the combined wealth of George and Martha was no longer available for upkeep.

One of these Quakers, David Walton, a widower with three children, who built "Walnut Hill," (recently demolished to make way for Woodlawn Country Club), had previously married Jemima

Ann Ballinger, a widow with two sons. Her son John married David Walton's daughter Rebecca and, after the ceremony which took place at Walnut Hill, drove with his bride to his new house which he had built on his 200 acres which lay adjacent to the Walnut Hill property.

The large, 16-sided barn, which George Washington had built, as well as the small house and shelter for fifty slaves previously mentioned, were on the land acquired by John Ballinger. The basement of this 16-foot x 18-foot house with its thick stone walls, was incorporated into the basement of the Ballinger house. The new house was a large three-story wooden structure, having two two-story wings (since removed), in addition to the eleven rooms, utility areas and halls remaining in the present house.

At some considerably later date outside walls of brick were put up over the original walls of wood. The general design of the house, although not as ornamental as most quality houses of that period in Virginia, was excellent. The rooms are large, with 10-foot-high ceilings. More than thirty large windows allow an unusually wide vision across the pastoral surroundings. In keeping with traditional Quaker traits, the house, though simply styled, was extremely well constructed. Hard pine was used for interior trim, doors and much of the framing. Consequently the basic structure has remained sound and sturdy over the 106 years since it was built.

One interesting bit of architecture was incorporated into the design, in that one of the three brick chimneys was built on an incline from the vertical, so that it could emerge through the ridge of the roof instead of through the slope. The late Dr. L. B. Tuckerman of the National Bureau of Standards stated that, particularly in New England, such chimney construction was considered quite a tribute to the skill of the mason.

Floors of the house are of beautiful "vertical" grain hard pine. This provides an excellent wearing surface. Age has mellowed the wood so that it has acquired a soft yellow sheen.

The setting of the house was with its front entrance and porch facing the east-southeast, with another porch facing the south-southwest. The original large 19-foot x 35-foot living room and the master bedroom with adjoining room (once a nursery, and now a library) were thus favored by the prevailing breezes and morning sunlight.

THE PERIOD 1861 TO 1949

John and Rebecca Ballinger enjoyed their large house for only a few years when they felt they had to leave it temporarily. This was during the Civil War when the Virginia Quakers felt the tragedy of divided loyalty. Although many stood by their Quaker teachings, some of the younger men joined the fighting forces of one or the other side. The only neutral ground in the vicinity that both Union and Southern forces respected was Mount Vernon and its some 200 acres. Accordingly, the Ballingers went back to New Jersey for some time. However, there is no evidence that Union Farm suffered any damage during the War. This may have been because of its proximity to Mount Vernon as well as to the indication that, in general, the "Principles of the Friends" were respected by the non-Quakers in the area. Soldiers probably made some occupancy of Union Farm, for recently a Civil War rifle bullet mold was dug up near the house.

Most of the preceding has devoted itself to the very early history of Union Farm and Union Farm House, whereas the following concerns the more recent time.

From 1917 to 1945 Union Farm was the home and property of Senator Moses Clapp and family, and the fact that the house is sometimes referred to, locally, as the Clapp House, stands as a tribute to the Clapp family. They apparently enjoyed the place greatly, for the Clapp children frequently visit the place today when they make trips to the Washington area.

And it is with nostalgic feelings for the youthful days when they lived at Union Farm (they are now grown up with families of their own) that they will recall such incidents as the horse with the broken leg that was supported from a huge limb of the ash tree while recuperating; the floor in the front hall that required relaying after Harvey had accidentally discharged his shotgun when leaving for a hunt; climbing out of the third-floor window onto a limb of the old ash tree—thence to the ground—and the resulting corporal discipline administered by a parent. Also the discovery—long after Easter—of some non-boiled Easter eggs in the attic; the friendly throwing of same at, and also by, their playmates, with the ensuing mess, as well as the odor throughout the house.

In 1945 Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Magruder purchased Union Farm House and a portion of the original farm from the children of the deceased Senator Moses Clapp. They accomplished some renovating and modification of the house but were careful to preserve its basic design and structure. One of their interesting contributions

was the building of cupboards in the kitchen from "pickled" pine lumber that was originally in the Stabler Leadbeater Apothecary Shop in Alexandria. This Apothecary Shop had the longest continuous operation of any in America—from 1792 to 1932—and is now a museum. Another act was the placement over the living-room fireplace of a mantel obtained from a recreation room used by George Washington located under the Carriage House at the rear of 112 South Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia. They also increased the height of the front porch to two stories, thus providing improved protection and ventilation for two of the front second-story bedrooms.

THE PERIOD 1949 TO THE PRESENT

The present owners of Union Farm purchased it from the Magruders in July, 1949. Plans for extensive rehabilitation and improvement of both the house and the land were laid. Essential restoration was accomplished within a few years, with some work such as the development of a beautiful four-acre lawn into its present condition, the planting of the orchard and its growth to bearing size taking much longer.

Reconditioning of the house included major items such as the installation of modern central heating and water systems; converting one back porch into a conservatory; addition of brick walks and terrace, copper gutters and replacement of original slate roof; completely redecorating the interior of the house, and converting the old 16-foot x 18-foot, thick stone-walled portion of the basement into a cold room and wine cellar.

An underground water line was laid, from the branch of Dogue Creek which crosses the northeast corner of the property, to hydrants in the lawn, yard and garden, thus insuring adequate water for trees, shrubs, garden and orchard.

Following the title search, mentioned before, arrangements were made for the casting of a 24-inch x 30-inch bronze plaque, with the names of successive owners and dates of ownership inscribed thereon. The plaque was then permanently fixed to a large stone which was on the premises, and which had been used in the olden days to assist riders in mounting their horses.

The area selected for the planting of an orchard and garden had at one time been a barnyard. The barn had burned down years before and the area on which it stood had never been touched since. Consequently it had to be cleared of second-growth trees. Some rather large quantities of stones, brickbats and metal items were dug up. Some of these last were very interesting and

some still usable. One was a 4-inch x 6-inch, wrought-iron door lock which, after some cleaning, could be used on the thick oak door to the cold room and wine cellar. Some large wrought-iron strap hinges were likewise dug up and used. Quantities of wrought-iron square nails of all sizes, including 8-inch spikes, were found. Even today, when garden ploughing is underway, it is not uncommon to uncover additional relics such as the recently-found bullet mold previously mentioned.

In the side yard an interesting sundial was constructed. The column is a 12-inch x 12-inch x 24-inch stone property marker of unknown origin. Placed horizontally on top of this column, as a base for the bronze time indicator, is an iron-banded, 30-inch-diameter buckwheat grinding stone from George Washington's Grist Mill. This buckwheat millstone was a gift to John Ballinger from the former miller, Mr. Roberts, during the period when the Grist Mill was deteriorating into ruins and prior to its restoration. This was in keeping with the considerable utilization of stones from the Mill by various Quakers when building their houses. (The two great millstones were used as carriage steps in front of the Troth house in Accotink, and David Walton built the foundation of his Walnut Hill house with stones from the Mill.)

UNION FARM AT PRESENT

The large lawn contributes to the air of old-fashioned peace and quiet that prevails. No other houses are nearby. Coveys of quail that live in the nearby woods, take their morning and late-afternoon strolls, except in nesting season, over the lawn, through the garden and yard, industriously stuffing themselves. Cardinals, mockingbirds, wrens, robins, mourning doves, song-sparrows, woodpeckers (even the large pileated type), waxwings, bluebirds, orioles, tanagers, thrushes and finches abound in quantity. Opposums, skunks and an occasional fox and deer also like to visit Union Farm.

Many fine old trees surround the House. One is a 40-foot bearing holly. Another is an ash, which according to figures published by the American Forestry Association in 1961, may be the largest of its species in the United States. Its trunk measures 14 feet-9 inches in circumference and its maximum crown span is over 100 feet.

In summary, Union Farm today, in its peaceful surroundings, combines the good of both old and new,—modern conveniences, installed without violation of the well-planned, sturdy, basic design of the house and grounds that testify to many years of care. It is indeed a pleasant country place.

The Home Place

By Joan Gibbs Lyon

If it ever had a formal name, I never heard it. But to my great-grandfather, my grandfather, my father, and to me as a child it was "the home place" and, probably, "the Gibbs' place" to all the neighbors. My father, Edward Curtis Gibbs, is the one who should have written this story, for he knew the history of the Mount Vernon area, chapter and verse. Since he never got around to it, it is I who must attempt to give the story as it has been handed down to me.

My great-grandfather, Edward Curtis Gibbs, for whom my father was named, was a Quaker from New Jersey. He was a sea captain between New Jersey and Liverpool. His mother objected to his following the sea and told him that, if he would give up this way of life, she would purchase a farm for him in Virginia where the Quaker settlement was beginning to spring up in the Woodlawn-Mount Vernon area. His wife's brother, Paul Hillman Troth, had come down originally with Chalkley Gillingham, so there would be family ties for them here.

Thus, in 1852 great-grandfather bought "Little Hollin Hall" and moved to Virginia. The family remained there until 1869 when he purchased "the home place," to which this refers, from John Augustine Washington. Because Mr. Washington died before the sales of this and another piece of land up Route No. 235 (the Sarah Washington Miles' property) were completed, there was a friendly chancery suit entered in the Court to obtain clear title to the lands.

"Home" was a typical two-story, one-room-wide, frame farm house, with the long porch running across the front and was set back from the road on a slight rise on the West side of the road from Mount Vernon to Gum Springs. It was approximately one-quarter mile from the Mount Vernon entrance. I have heard that this house was built on the site of what had been the home of General Washington's overseer of that part of his property. About 1923, my father and mother did over the old house, removing the front porch and adding a screened porch on the south end. My father always regretted that he did not preserve, and encase in glass in its original position in the building, the hand-hewn beams pegged together to form the framework of the house.

The family ran a typical farm there, with my great-uncle, J. Norman Gibbs, on the adjoining property. My grandfather, Charles Edward Gibbs, later made a specialty of raising strawberries and other delicacies for the markets and hotels of Washington, D.C. At 21 my father took over the operation of the farm and all his life swore he would never milk another cow!

By the time I came along, the family had disposed of all of the farm except the house and twelve acres. Imagine what a paradise this was for a little girl with three large hounds at her heels. In those days Route No. 235 was the main approach to Mount Vernon Estate. The A.,B.&W. ran buses in front of our house and I, of course, knew the drivers. I am sure there is still many a bewildered tourist who wonders about the bus stopping at the end of our lane and taking on my dogs and me for the short ride over to the Station to my parents. The "Station" was the Mount Vernon terminus for the electric car line from Alexandria and Washington and my parents ran the station and restaurant there. So, my bus ride was a treat, for I usually came back in the wagon with Tom Garrett, our colored employee, with the dogs trotting along behind.

Footnotes From the Gibbs' Family

Edward Curtis Gibbs, owner of Little Hollin Hall, was living there at the time of the War Between the States. Since the family was Quaker, it took no part in the conflict. Charles Edward Gibbs was a young boy at the time and remembered this incident. He and his father were out at the barn on the hill behind the house one afternoon when they heard hoofbeats and a Confederate officer rode up. He told Mr. Gibbs he had been sent to fetch the colored boy, Billy Holland. Mr. Gibbs turned over Billy to him and they left. A short time later, the same officer rode up and said he'd been sent to get the colored boy's coat. Mr. Gibbs told him it was in the barn and to help himself but that he'd better be careful for there were Union pickets on the hill up from the house. Without a word the Confederate officer whirled his horse and was gone.

Years later Charles Edward Gibbs was a salesman for Champion Machine Company traveling through the deep South. He traveled by horse and buggy and usually spent the night at the plantation on which he was calling. One night, he and his elderly host were reminiscing about the War. Mr. Gibbs told this story of his childhood recollection. In one of those "stranger than fiction" coincidences, the old gentleman hooted with laughter and said, "That was me! I wasn't sent up there for that boy's coat.

We thought you all were Yankee sympathizers and troops were hidden in that barn. I had orders to burn it. But when your father told me Union pickets were out, I got out of there in a hurry."

Billy Holland made his way back to this area after the War and was "Uncle Billy Holland" in later years. He came around from farm to farm as an itinerant butcher. The Gibbs family got a good deal of their meats from him. His son, Ferris Holland, had Uncle Billy set down for him what happened to him when the Confederates took him away from Little Hollin Hall.

I was always told that Edward Curtis Gibbs was asked to leave the Quaker Church. He did not come before the congregation and the facing bench to ask permission to marry his wife. When called before the facing bench and asked to apologize for not having asked permission, he informed them: "I'll be damned if I'll apologize to anyone for marrying my wife." Consequently the family became Presbyterian!

The Friends settlement was upset and disheartened by the War Between the States. Many of them went back to New Jersey and many were getting ready to go back. Hillman Troth was taken prisoner and taken to Libbey Prison in Richmond. Since he was a leader in the group, this frightened them very much and most of them got ready to leave the area. Before they could execute their plans, Hillman Troth returned from the prison with passes signed by both Confederate and Union officers and assurance that the Quaker Colony in the Woodlawn-Mount Vernon area was not to be molested in any way.

* * * *

J. Norman Gibbs, who surveyed and subdivided Wellington Villa, was a complete individualist. For years and years he drove a Model T Ford. My mother always maintained that he carried everything but a knife, fork and spoon in it. I know he always carried a bear-skin coat. When Mount Vernon Boulevard was opened, my mother found a hammock in the back seat and asked what it was for. He said that "road" was the most monotonous thing he'd ever driven. When he got tired, he just pulled off into some woods, swung his hammock, and took a nap. When he was refreshed, he got up and drove on home.



—(Picture courtesy Mrs. Joan Gibbs Lyon)

Gibb's Place near Mount Vernon.



—(Picture courtesy Mrs. Joan Gibbs Lyon)

Terminal for the electric car line from Alexandria and Washington to Mount Vernon.



—(Picture courtesy Charles Kirk Wilkinson)

SHERWOOD, built 1859, has sheltered five generations of the same family.

Reminiscences of Sherwood Farm and the Surrounding Area

By Charles Kirk Wilkinson

The history of Sherwood Farm began in 1858 when one hundred acres of land north of Accotink Turnpike (now Sherwood Hall Lane) was purchased by my grandfather, Charles Ballinger, from Edward Curtis Gibbs of Hollin Hall. Hollin Hall was originally owned by Thomson Mason, a son of George Mason of Gunston Hall, who, in 1852 sold five hundred acres to Gibbs for \$8,000. Charles Ballinger, a brother of John Ballinger of Union Farm, married Maria Gibbs, a daughter of Edward Curtis Gibbs, and built a house on his newly-acquired acreage in 1859.

Seven or eight years later he purchased an additional hundred acres of land south of the Accotink Turnpike exactly opposite the original purchase. The two hundred acre total which constituted Sherwood Farm has been in my family for five generations and was maintained intact until a few years ago. The suburban communities of Kirkside, Hollinbrook, and a part of Hollin Hall Village have been built in the past few years on portions of Sherwood Farm.

My mother, Mary Alice Ballinger, was born in the house here at Sherwood Farm in 1866. She married Francis H. Wilkinson, a son of Morris R. Wilkinson and Sara Kirk Wilkinson of Gray's Hill Farm (now a portion of Fort Belvoir) in 1891. My father's family came to Gray's Hill Farm from Cecil County, Maryland, in 1888.

I was born at Sherwood in 1894. Since there were no public schools in this area, my first two years of education was received at home. In 1903 a one-room public school was erected on $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of ground donated by Stacey Snowden at what is now the intersection of Chadwick Lane and Fort Hunt Road, formerly known as "Neck Road." The Neck Road extended from Accotink Turnpike to Fort Hunt. It is interesting to note that Miss Nellie Nevitt was one of the school's first teachers. Miss Nevitt taught me during my second year at the school. She taught in Fairfax County schools for approximately fifty years after that.

Upon completion of four years of instruction at the "Snowden School," I transferred to a Washington, D.C., public school and

later to Sidwell Friends School. I walked to and from home to the Belmont Station on the old electric car line that ran from Mt. Vernon to Washington, where I commuted to Washington each school day. The railway track from Alexandria to Collingwood followed, more or less, the present route of the George Washington Memorial Parkway. Either of two stations on the railway could service Sherwood Farm. One at the intersection of Morningside Drive and the Parkway was called Warwick Station. The other, at what is now the intersection of the Parkway and Alexandria Avenue, was known as Belmont Station until 1912 when the name was changed to Wellington Villa.

There were no gasoline-powered farm tractors, trucks or cars at the time of my childhood. Horses, mules and manpower provided the energy and means for plowing, sowing, reaping, storage and transportation of farm produce. There were horse- and mule-drawn reapers, and wood-burning steam engines for threshing grain. One traveled by foot, on horseback, by buggy or carriage, and by wagon. In the winter months horse-drawn sleighs often provided the easiest means of transportation.

Clubs and community affairs provided a means of recreation and were a source of local news. The principal social group of the farmers and their families in the area was known as the Woodlawn Farmer's Club. I do not know when or how the group was organized. When I was a youngster the group met each month on the Saturday nearest the full moon. The reason for scheduling the meeting on that particular Saturday was a practical one as there would be more light to see your way home. One felt safer, too. My parents planned to have the Club at Sherwood in April each year. The farmers, their families and guests would begin arriving on horseback, in buggies, in carriages and in wagons about noon. First, there would be business meetings—one held by the men and, at the same time, one held by the ladies. After the meetings broke up, visiting and old-fashioned conversation occupied the time until dinner. Dinner was furnished by the host and hostess for that month's meeting. I remember that we served dinner for over one hundred members and guests one time. After dinner, the families began their departure. The time of departure depended upon the distance back to their homes and the condition of the roads.

One of the men's organizations of note was the Woodlawn Horse Company which had been founded on October 7th, 1865, as a protective measure against the prevalent evil of horse stealing. The preamble to its constitution states "We, the undersigned,

citizens of Fairfax County, Va., deem it necessary for our mutual protection against horse-thieves to form ourselves into a company—" Its members were horse owners, regardless of race, who immediately formed vigilante-type groups to seek out and recover a member's lost, strayed or stolen horse. The members met once a year, always on the last Monday in December. It was obligatory for a member to attend regardless of his own illness, illness in his family or because of the meeting day falling on Christmas Day. If a member did not attend he was fined \$2.00. That was quite a large sum in those days. My father was one of the Company officers for many years and was Treasurer when it disbanded in 1936. I have in my possession the original Record Book showing the Treasurer's reports from 1865 to 1922. It is interesting to note the names of the twenty-one charter members, many of whose descendants are residents of our area today. They are, according to the record, Courtland Lukens (builder and owner of Haddon Hall on Route No. 1), T. S. Wright, Walter Walton, John Trueax, J. Ballinger (owner of Union Farm), A. Denite, Lewis Gillingham, David Walton (owner of Walnut Hill which was recently demolished to make way for the Woodlawn Country Club), L. B. Stiles, William Mason, Ezra Troth, Sr., James Hunter, E. E. Mason, D. Buckman, L. Butts, Edward Denike, Henry Trueax, Charles Ballinger (owner of Sherwood Farm), Warrington Gillingham, P. H. Troth and Chalky Gillingham (the last two being instrumental in establishing the Quaker settlement here). The Record for 1870 shows "\$20 reward for stolen horse, paid to Warrington Gillingham, on March 3."

In the last years of its existence, the Company used its funds for philanthropic purposes. Because the men were mainly interested in their agricultural and business pursuits, the ladies were responsible for the religious and charitable organizations in the community. One of the most effective charitable organizations during this period of my life was that of the King's Daughters, a non-sectarian organization. There were seven "Circles" of King's Daughters in the Alexandria-Fairfax County area. The Mount Vernon Circle of King's Daughters, to which my grandmother and mother belonged, was composed of ladies living in this community, Alexandria and even Washington. This Circle contributed its time, labor and money to local, national and foreign needs. After the Civil War, the ladies organized and conducted a Sunday School for Negroes at Gum Springs. Upon the formation of the Alexandria Infirmary Association and the receipt of its Charter from the State of Virginia on December 23, 1872, the Mount Vernon Circle

of King's Daughters assumed the responsibility of furnishing ward fixtures and supplies. Later the Alexandria Infirmary became the Alexandria Hospital. Many plaques may be seen on the doors of rooms and wards in the present Duke Street Hospital which indicates the extent of the Circle's charitable work.

In addition, the Mount Vernon Circle of King's Daughters donated to the Chautauqua Fund, adopted and supported war orphans in foreign lands, and contributed to the Near East Foundation.

Aside from dues, cake and rummage sales, the members of the Circle served chicken and oyster dinners in the spring and in the fall. The food was invariably delicious, which made the dinners famous for miles around. Often diners came from Washington. In the early years they came by electric railway and were met at either Belmont or the Warwick Stations. In later years they came by automobile.

For quite some time a special building had been needed by the Circle for meetings, for serving dinners and for holding Sunday School classes. In 1903, my grandmother donated a half acre of land, and Sherwood Hall was built by the King's Daughters. This hall was used by them, by the Mount Vernon Grange and other civic groups until the 1940s when it ceased to be needed or used. In 1946 the building was razed and the land reverted to Sherwood Farm. After the construction of Sherwood Hall and the paving of U. S. No. 1 Highway, Accotink Turnpike from the Fort Hunt Road, to U. S. No. 1 became known as Sherwood Hall Road or Sherwood Hall Lane.

To go back a bit for another interesting development, the remainder of Hollin Hall was sold by the Gibbs family to Theron Thompson of New York state in 1869. His purchase consisted of approximately 300 acres, upon which he started a dairy farm. In 1881 his son, John Thompson, rented a building in Washington for receiving milk produced by his father and brothers. At first milk was shipped by boat but after the advent of the electric railway, it was shipped daily over this route. John peddled the milk door-to-door from a horse-drawn wagon. As the demand for milk grew, another brother, Daniel of River View Farm (later called Ordleight), shipped milk to the Dairy. In time, still another brother, Arthur, who had developed a dairy farm in Maryland, sent milk to the family dairy. My grandmother, as well as other farmers from Alexandria to Ingleside, also shipped milk to Thompson's Dairy. In fact, dairying became the principal industry of the

area. The Thompson's Dairy is still owned and operated by Lee Thompson, a son of Arthur Thompson.

Sherwood Farm produced and retailed milk in Alexandria from 1918 to 1940. But now it has ceased to exist as a dairy. It has changed into suburban communities, as have the other farms round about. My remembrances of these farms and their inhabitants are many and varied and, for the most part, they are pleasant ones.

Along the River Front

*Wellington, Riverview, Arcturus, Andalusia, Herbert Springs,
Collingwood*

By Mayme Parker

The hamlet of Arcturus on the Potomac, a river shore settlement, lies nestled between Wellington to the north and Collingwood to the south, all a part of the original Mount Vernon River Farm. Arcturus is one of the earliest settlements located on General Washington's 8,800-acre estate. It was laid out by William H. Snowden on part of the land acquired from one of the Washington heirs and was given the same name Snowden had selected for the post office which he operated many years in his own home.

An epic of Arcturus is essentially the story of three Snowden brothers—Stacy, Isaac, and more especially, William H.—Quakers, who came from their New Jersey homestead and located along the Potomac River in the George Washington country.

It was about the time the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union had raised the required sum to buy Washington's home. The work of restoration was under way. Their efforts to "Save Mount Vernon" had won for the Association interest and admiration the country over. Now, visitors and prospectors were eager to see Mount Vernon and, perchance, to locate nearby.

The tide of immigration had started about 1846, after a band of Quakers from New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and other northern States followed the Troths and Gillinghams who came from New Jersey to buy from Lorenzo Lewis his Woodlawn Plantation with its heavily wooded areas. They were seeking a type of timber needed in their ship-building enterprise.

Thus, in 1859, Charles A. Washington, a great-nephew of the General, sold 652 acres of his inheritance, including Wellington Farm, to Stacy H. Snowden, this being the section designated E on the map which General Washington had prepared in December 1793. One of the notes on the map reads, "The use of this farm is given to a relation."

The General had given a life interest in this farm to his private secretary, Tobias Lear, who twice married into the Washington family circle and was considered a relation. After Lear's death, in 1816, the farm reverted to the Washington family. Charles A. Wash-

ington was the second generation in line of ownership after Lear's demise.

The boundary of Section E on the map, is the northern boundary of the land bought by Stacy Snowden, and generally referred to as part of Washington's River Farm. It was the same land Washington had purchased in 1769 from William Clifton, who about 1740 had built the house known as Wellington, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Matheson. The Clifton Ferry which furnished Washington and his fellow statesmen convenient travel to Annapolis, Philadelphia and other northern cities, was noted for excellent accommodations and fine food at the ferry house landing. The ferry was discontinued after 1808. The building fell to ruins about 1850.

The earliest date the Snowden name was mentioned in ownership of the Wellington (or Clifton Neck) farm, was 1859, according to this research. Whether Stacy, whose name is on the deed, represented his brother, is not shown, but in 1866, Stacy, age 36 and Isaac, 53, sold jointly, 280 acres of the 652-acre tract, referred to above, to a "syndicate" whose members were Valentine Baker, David Frost, and Daniel P. Smith.

Isaac Snowden and his wife, Ann, were living at Wellington House. Their daughter and only child, Elizabeth Eayre, was born there in 1862. When the Snowdens sold the 280 acres to the "syndicate," Isaac and his family moved to their spacious new home, "Riverview," which they had built next door to Wellington. David Frost then occupied Wellington House and the farm land, which included the present Wellington Villa and part of the Dyke. Years later Wellington was owned by Daniel Thompson's sister, Miss Theresa Thompson, a member of the dairy firm established at Hollin Hall Estate in 1881.

In 1885, Isaac Snowden's daughter, Elizabeth Eayre and Daniel Dickinson Thompson of Hollin Hall were married in a Quaker ceremony at Riverview. Here they lived many years, and the five Thompson children grew to maturity. The Daniel Thompson children tell how they would scamper down from Riverview at Wellington to Uncle Will's at Arcturus, and to Uncle Stace and Aunt Sally's at Collingwood using the river shore. Crossing the marsh as they entered Arcturus, they had been warned of quicksand, and cautioned to keep to the fallen tree which they used as a footbridge.

Stacy Snowden's holdings extended south and included a

large tract reaching from the Potomac River on the east, to the colored graveyard west of Sheridan Point Road (Fort Hunt Road). Herbert Springs was a part of his land, which was shared by his brother William H. Snowden. Stacy's acreage joined the Charles Wilkins farm, "Grassymede," to the south—the site of the present Waynewood Subdivision.

In using the name "Collingwood" for his homesite, Stacy doubtless had in mind the Quaker meeting at Collingwood in his native New Jersey. According to his niece, Mrs. McLendon, Washington, D.C., it was not unusual for Quakers to remember the meetings in their home states when naming their new-found homes.

Here, Stacy and his wife, Sally, established their new home, residing first at Herbert Springs. Later they built an imposing house near the river shore, where an early Indian village, Assao-meck, was the stronghold of the Dogue Tribe. To this day, arrow heads and flints may be found along the Potomac beaches.

The Stacy Snowdens' only child, Frank, married Miss Kate Wilbur from Brooklyn about 1890. He died within a year, but she continued to live with his parents at Collingwood. Later, a dear friend, Miss Jean Bulmer, came to live with "Miss Kate." When fire destroyed their home, which had been built near the river, they built two new houses, side by side, each completely furnished, but they continued to share the same dwelling and use the other as a guest house. They died about 15 years ago, but "Miss Kate," who was something of a historian of this area, in her own right, contributed a considerable amount of historic information in her lifetime.

Before the turn of the century, an amusement park, or resort, was developed in Collingwood, and named "Riverside Park." A long boat landing, or dock was built out to deep water, and the park was a favorite resort for a number of years. The piling until recently has been visible, but was a hazard to speeding watercraft.

By 1869, "Captain" William H. Snowden, age 44, poet, historian, writer, and researcher joined his brothers in the Mount Vernon community and selected for his country seat a choice five-acre knoll situated between the newly-established homes of his brothers at Riverview on the Wellington (Clifton) Farm and Stacy, at Collingwood Farm to the South. But the knoll with its magnificent view of the Potomac, the placid Maryland shoreline across the wide waters, the 200-year-old St. John's Episcopal

Church at the head of Broad Creek and the fine outline of the Nation's Capitol at Washington, was a part of the land owned by the "syndicate," now about to break up. So the "Captain" purchased two acres from Daniel P. Smith and three acres from the Baker-Frost partnership. The deed was dated February 20, 1869. And here the third Snowden brother, William, built his home, "Andalusia."

The name "Andalusia" suggests a picturesque region in Spain. It is suggestive also of the Elysium Fields of Mythology, "Land of the Blessed." Here the Captain dwelt in serene contentment, continuing his writings and historical research. His contributions were published by many historical groups. He was referred to by a well known local historian as "William H. Snowden, Esq. A.M., of Andalusia, Va., member of the Virginia Historical Society, author of Historical Sketches of New Jersey, Virginia, and Maryland . . ."

Ever alert to bring improvements, enterprising and well educated, Captain Snowden would make trips to Alexandria for his mail and return with letters and papers for his neighbors. This service was welcome. The Post Office Department was gratified when a reliable volunteer would offer his services. The neighbors would call at Snowden's pantry window, when the mail was in. After several years of this service, the Post Office Department offered to let Captain Snowden establish a regular post office in his residence. He was given the privilege of suggesting its name.

The names he submitted as appropriate however, were rejected until, a star in the sky on a bright summer evening inspired him to offer the name "Arcturus." The name was accepted and the post office operated, from 1893 until 1902, with William H. Snowden as the only postmaster. His service continued even after the Rural Free Delivery was established in 1896, according to the National Archives, Postal Section. The star Arcturus of the Constellation Bootes, is visible in the northern hemisphere from March until October, and is best seen in the month of June, when it is directly overhead about 10:00 p.m. Arcturus is found in line with the last two stars in the handle of the Great Dipper.

In 1874, Captain Snowden added 19 acres to his Andalusia homestead, by purchase from the Baker-Smith-Frost partners and became a farmer, according to the 1860 and 1870 census, as were his brothers and neighbors.

An overland route to the home and tomb of our First Presi-

dent, was revived as a favorite topic of speculation. By 1890 Congress enacted the bill authorizing an appropriate route. The Virginia Assembly approved the establishing of an electric railway from Alexandria to Mount Vernon to connect with and serve the ferry already in operation between Washington and Alexandria.

Snowden set about making ready for the "advance of progress," for surely the route to Mount Vernon would come his way! He engaged one Rollin A. Harris of Washington City to survey the lots Snowden planned for the "hamlet of Arcturus." He envisioned platting seven lots and seven avenues. Magnetic bearings of 1893 were used. A guide book, consisting of historical sketches of local landmarks, was planned in booklet form and sold to travelers on the electric car line. Snowden dreamed of the time when transportation would bring new home owners into the Mount Vernon farmlands.

Timing the completion of the railway line for September 1892, to serve the anniversary of the Grand Army of the Republic, work was started by the contractor laying tracks, and stringing trolley wires. The work was practically completed in the stipulated time of four months. The Captain had in preparation his guide book to be sold on the trains; his building sites were ready to attract future suburbanites, and his "hamlet" was well laid out to meet the coming demand! The main avenue from Arcturus Station on the railway was named Mount Vernon Avenue. Other roads provided transportation and service for the dwellers. One road was to serve patrons of a coal barge that would unload coal at the swamp north of Arcturus. Jefferson Park, reserved for the use of the original property holders as access to the Potomac River, was set aside and devised in Captain Snowden's will.

A few of Captain Snowden's lots were sold in the 1890's, others in the early 1900's. The tract was essentially farmland. But when Mr. and Mrs. J. Frank Carlin in 1905 determined to buy Andalusia, the Captain built a new house for his wife and himself, and a new tenant house for his farmer on two of the recently opened lots. The Carlins in turn sold to the Aldrich Dudleys. Mrs. Dudley still resides at Andalusia.

Among the first and most colorful residents of Arcturus, other than the Captain, himself were Eugenia DeLand and her husband, Olaf Saugstad. In payment for her pen and ink sketches illustrating his guide book, Captain Snowden gave to Miss DeLand building lot No. 3. She and her husband, both teachers at McKinley Technical High School, Washington, D.C., built their studio "with

their own hands" as an example of their arts. She was a designer and teacher of commercial art; he a clever artisan in art metal, wood carving and construction. Their studio residence was unique for design and construction with odd-shaped windows painted with bluebirds and Viking's ships. She was noted for her poster, used in World War I, of the Statue of Liberty with the Flag of the United States of America. Upon their death, the studio was deeded to Col. George H. Welles, USA (Ret.) and Mrs. Wells who have continued to improve the building.

Other property owners of Arcturus on the Potomac River, as the Captain called it, were Miss Theresa Thompson, one of the owners of the Thompson Dairy. She bought the farmer's cottage which now has passed through a succession of owners. The late Mr. and Mrs. William A. Webster bought one of three choice waterfront lots and built an attractive residence about 1914. It is occupied by their daughter, Mrs. Emilie A. W. Miller. The Joseph H. Pilling residence, also a waterfront property, was built by him after 1900. Following Pilling, owners have been George French, John Potts, Robert J. Wilson, and presently Mrs. Esther Van Wagoner Tufty. Reeves Strickland, in 1900 bought Lot No. 2 from Snowden. This was one of three waterfront dwellings. Strickland sold to Faunce, who in turn sold to Mayme C. Parker, the present owner since 1920. Captain Snowden's new house was occupied by his widow after his death in 1908, until it was purchased about 1919 by David Pelton Moore, who bought also the remaining farmland from Mrs. Snowden. The Snowden house in Arcturus is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Buckmaster.

Near the entrance to Arcturus Road (Mount Vernon Avenue) is the depression of the old road over which Washington passed through his river farm to his Clifton Ferry on the Wellington shore, as identified by Captain Snowden.

William H. Snowden at one time owned the acreage called Herbert Springs. It is believed named for the spring at the southern boundary of the Chadwick homestead. The Herbert family resided in the Mount Vernon area. Upton Herbert, first superintendent at Mount Vernon, was listed in the 1860 Census, as "Mine Host, Mount Vernon, a native Virginian." His aunt was residing nearby, according to Dorothy Troth Muir.

About 1908, John P. Chadwick and his fiance, Miss Janie Ballenger, purchased from William H. Snowden, a large tract of land extending west from the Potomac River to Fort Hunt Road. It was bounded by the Arcturus Road on the north, and Herbert

Springs Road on the south. They built on the river shore and occupied the house immediately after their wedding ceremony. Later they built a handsome residence on the ridge to the west and adjoining Andalusia to the north. Five acres immediately north of their own residence, they sold to Maj. and Mrs. James E. King, Alexandria, about 1910, and the Kings built their dream house, "Kingcrest on the Potomac."

Other early residents at Herbert Springs were the Van Nuyess family, whose three children rode the electric car to old Sidwell's Friends School in Washington, as did so many other children of the neighborhood. Lars Eidsness, distinguished as the founder of the Philatelist Division of the Post Office Department also was an early resident. His father and sisters were residents of Wellington Villa.

Maj. Gen. Stanley L. Scott, USA (Ret.), and Mrs. Scott, located at Herbert Springs upon his retirement as commanding officer at Fort Belvoir; Gen. Charles L. Bolte, USA (Ret.) and Mrs. Bolte too, have settled here. Other residents are Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Bowersock, whose spacious home overlooks the riverfront. "Kingcrest" is owned by Mr. George Gray, presently U. S. Consul at Tahiti.

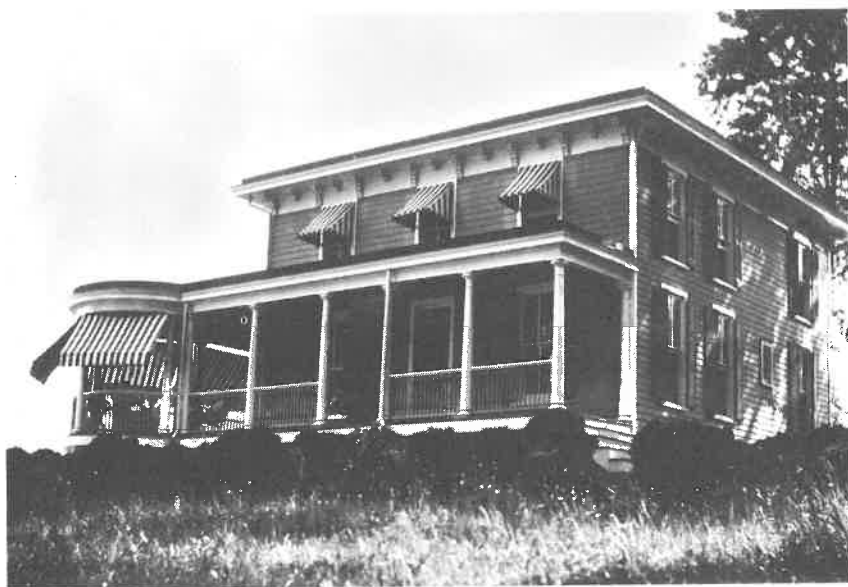
In 1881 when the family of Theron Thompson of Hollin Hall engaged in the dairy business, first in Alexandria and later extended their operation to Washington City, their milk was shipped overland to Alexandria, to be carried by ferry to the Washington wharf. With the coming of the electric line to Mount Vernon, a daily freight service was a tremendous asset to farmers, dairymen and other businessmen. One of the Thompsons sons, John Thompson, bought a small acreage from Stacy Snowden at Herbert Springs and Collingwood, and operated a branch of the Thompson Dairy from his new home situated on the trolley line, where the milk for the Washington distributing center could so readily be handled. Egbert Thompson took over the Herbert Springs location, with its up-to-date dairy barns and facilities, from his brother and served the local patrons in addition to the shipping service to Washington. Part of this property, now known as Belepais, is the estate of the Leander McCormick-Goodharts. With the passing of the electric railway, preparatory to opening the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, bus and truck service superseded the trains.

The Wilkins-Rogers Milling Company, Inc., established in Georgetown, D. C., in 1914, by Howard Wilkins of Grassymede



—(Picture courtesy Miss Mayme Parker)

Early photograph of WELLINGTON HOUSE, built by William Clifton from whom Washington bought River Farm. Tobias Lear, Washington's secretary, was given a life interest here. After Lear's death, the house was inherited by Washington's nephews. Now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Matheson, it has been restored and modernized for contemporary use.



—(Picture courtesy J. Frank Carlin, Jr.)

ANDALUSIA, built by Captain William H. Snowden around 1869.



—(Picture courtesy Mrs. T. A. McLendon)

RIVERVIEW, built by Isaac Snowden, one of the three Quaker brothers who developed the river front in the Wellington area.

Farm and his partner, Rogers from Loudoun County, is another flourishing business that grew from the Mount Vernon area farmers, many of them Quakers. An early deed book records that John S. Thompson in 1889 sold 59 acres to Charles Wilkins.

Of note is the attitude of "togetherness" shown among those who migrated from the same States, and worked cooperatively here helping those who ventured into their separate projects. We find among the families of the neighborhood the names of Baker, Frost, Smith, Moore, Wilkins, Cox, Ballenger, Thompson, Mason (not of Gunston Hall), and many others. The list of area patrons shipping milk to the Thompson Dairy is almost identical; showing a spirit of ready participation in whatever was being undertaken by one of their group.

It is to be lamented that the Snowden name, once conspicuous with whatever seemed good for the countryside, is now only a memory. Once there was Snowden Road; Snowden Station on the electric railway line; Snowden School, attended by most of the children of the area, with Miss Alice Dove one of the first teachers, and other Snowden enterprises. This distinguished family flourished here for 100 years, bringing ideas and industry. Only the brother, Isaac, left descendants. But fortunately both Stacy and the "Captain" left names that can be perpetuated—Arcturus, Andalusia, Collingwood.

Wellington Villa and Vicinity

By Harry B. Lyon

The land on which Wellington Villa now stands probably was originally more or less evenly divided between the Washington family and the Mason family. The Frost family acquired these lands before the 1870's. The Frost family relinquished ownership in 1912, when Wellington Villa was subdivided into one-half acre lots for a summer colony. The Frost farm house, at what would now be on Southdown Road across from and slightly to the south of the stone overpass, was purchased by Charles Marshall and later by John Briar, but was torn down in the middle 1950's.

The dividing ditch between the Washington and Mason properties has not been determined with certainty, but some believe it ran approximately 150 yards south of "Red Barn Road," presently known as Alexandria Avenue.

From 1860 to 1875 a large brick yard was operated at Wellington. The bulkhead of this yard along the river at Brickyard Point can still be seen today on what is now the property of the Weeks' family. It is the land immediately north of and adjoining that of Malcolm Matheson, Sr. The brickyard was a very extensive commercial operation. Coal to operate this yard came from Cumberland, Maryland, by barge down the C. & O. Canal, across Aqueduct Bridge, to the canal basin in Alexandria. The canal basin is where the present shopping complex surrounds the Virginia Theater. The canal lock-out can still be seen on the east end of Montgomery Street in Alexandria. The barges were locked out and brought down to the brickyard by steam tug, where they unloaded coal, and were reloaded with brick, which was shipped to Georgetown for sale. The brickyard was closed about 1875 and moved to Little Hunting Creek near the end of what is now known as Whittington Boulevard. It had become unprofitable to haul clay the necessary distance, and the operation had outgrown its kiln and shipping facilities.

In 1892 an electric interurban line to Mount Vernon was put into operation. A small station was constructed at approximately the center of the present Alexandria Avenue bridge, which was known as Belmont Station or "The Cut-off." The latter name derived from the point at which the steam engine, which was used as a pusher from Dike up the hill to Red Barn Road, was cut off. This pusher service was used until 1903, when much of the roadbed was rebuilt and a power house built at New Alexandria. In 1906 the Washington, Alexandria, and Mount Vernon Railroad

ran 92 trains daily both ways between Washington and Alexandria. About 26 daily trains both ways and 4 freight trains ran between Washington and Mount Vernon. In 1906 the Railroad hauled 1,743,734 passengers, a rather startling figure for those days. In 1913 a new brick station replaced the original frame structure at Red Barn Road and it became known as Wellington Villa. Mrs. Charles E. Gibbs was telegrapher for the railroad at Mount Vernon Station. Edward C. Gibbs, her son was freight agent for the line, 1924 to 1930.

In the 1880's the U. S. Navy Hydrographic Office maintained a field station at what is now Collingwood-on-the-Potomac. In the early 1890's the station was abandoned and the property was turned into a colored amusement park. The pilings for the pier to this park may still be seen one-quarter of a mile south of the Collingwood Restaurant. Four of the frame buildings of the Hydrographic Station were put on what is now called "surplus" and sold to the amusement park. When the park closed, in 1912, the four buildings were loaded on flat cars and brought up to Wellington Station. They were unloaded by mule team and placed on various lots as summer cottages. Parts of those original four are still in existence today in Wellington Villa, with additions and remodelings.

In 1912, Wellington Villa was mostly open fields used for pasturing sheep. If one stood on the hill immediately north of the present Alexandria Avenue bridge, one could see clearly the Washington Monument and the Capitol.

Wellington Villa was considered an ideal spot for a summer colony. It was just far enough from town (Alexandria) to be quiet and rustic, was easily accessible by the car line, and the river afforded excellent swimming, boating, and fishing facilities. The atmosphere has changed somewhat with the building of the George Washington Memorial Highway. In the mid 1930's the area began to shift into permanent residences, and summer residences were winterized for year-round use.

The Passing of a Landmark

*Notes from an article by Mrs. Kate Snowden (deceased)
published in Alexandria Gazette*

Considerable research on the Snowden School has been done without completely satisfying results. Present evidence indicates that the first school was organized as early as 1870 in the Baker home to accommodate the children of several families in the neighborhood, and that the first school building was a one-room structure which burned about the turn of the century, but the exact location has not been definitely determined. A one-room building, apparently, was erected to replace it in 1903. A second room was added about the time of World War I, probably 1917 or 1918. In addition to regular classes, the building was used for church and Sunday school by the students from the Episcopal Seminary in Alexandria, and by various civic and community groups until it burned on February 21, 1941. Classes had been discontinued by that time and the pupils had been transferred to Groveton, when the first unit of the Groveton school was built.

Just what date Snowden became a public school under the County system has not been learned, but the names of several early teachers are known. Mrs. Josephine Baker was probably the first, followed by Miss Alice Dove. Miss Nellie Nevitt, who taught in Fairfax County more than fifty years, was another, as was Mrs. Emmet Finks. According to her son, Mrs. Finks taught there two years, without pay, before the County School Board knew Snowden School existed!

The following is from an article, written by Mrs. Kate Snowden, found in the Alexandria Gazette:

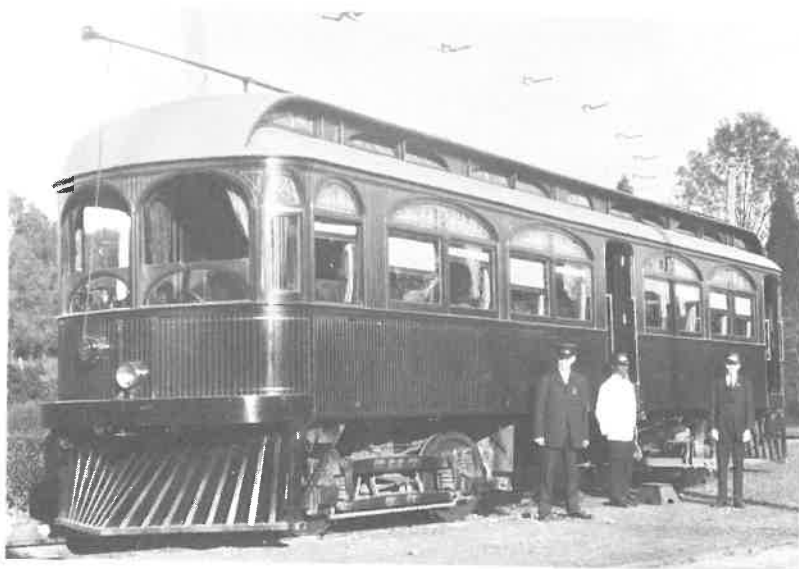
"Fire, which totally destroyed the old Snowden Schoolhouse on Fort Hunt Road in the Mount Vernon District on February 21, 1941, marked the passing of another old landmark in this area. . . .

"The school came into being back in 1870, when a building was erected by Theron Thompson, Sr. of Hollin Hall, Valentine Baker of Wellington, William Hunter of Cedar Hill and Stacy Snowden of Collingwood, on a piece of land donated by Snowden. The benches were crude and the only desks were boards around the sides of the room. Children worked facing the wall.



—(Picture courtesy Mrs. Joan Gibbs Lyon)

BELMONT STATION, on the electric car line, was later changed to Wellington Villa. It was located at the east end of the stone overpass on what was formerly called Red Barn Lane, but now known as Alexandria Avenue.



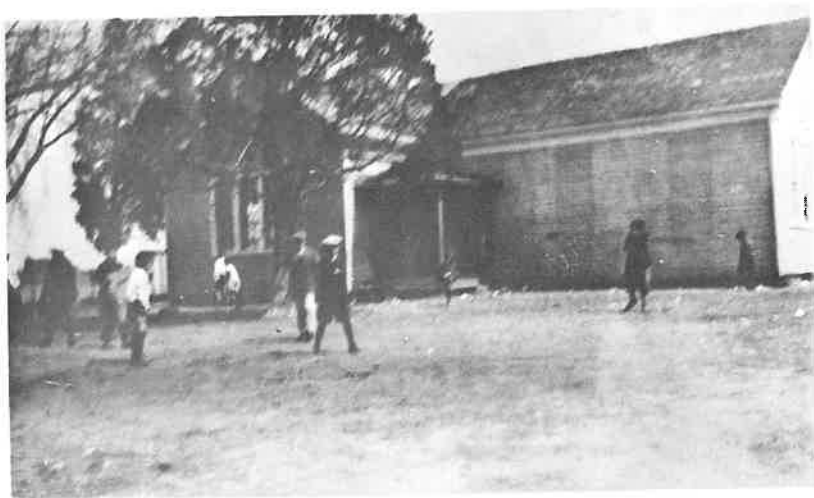
—(Picture courtesy Mrs. Joan Gibbs Lyon)

This lush "Parlor Car" transported VIPs to and from Mount Vernon over the old electric railway.



—(Picture courtesy Mrs. Joan Gibbs Lyon)

The trestle for the electric car line crossed Little Hunting Creek. Traces of piling are still visible at the end of Whittington Boulevard, which now leads from Cedar Lane to Stafford Landing subdivision. This street formerly was the roadbed of the car line.



—(Picture courtesy Frances Buckman)

Snowden School, after a second room had been added about the time of World War I.

"In a book of attendance records for the years 1872-1878, during which time the school was taught by Josephine Baker of Wellington, such still well-known names as Thompson, Baker, Frost, Ballinger, Boughton, Graw, Hunter, Snowden, and Eckhart appeared. School was held off and on for many years in the one room until the county secured possession of the land and added a second room. For two years, when the required attendance could not be maintained, D. D. Thompson of Riverview secured desks from the County, and school was held in his home with Miss Alice Dove as teacher. Riverview, later the site of the home of William Ord, now is the home of Gerald T. Halpin.

"This section of the Mount Vernon District along the Potomac and north of Little Hunting Creek was known in early days as Clifton's Neck and was purchased by William Clifton from the heirs of Giles Brent. Clifton built the Wellington house and lived in it until 1767 when it passed to the Washington family and became known as the River Farm of the Mount Vernon estate.

"Wellington is now occupied by Malcolm Matheson, Sr. The road running south through the property was known as Clifton Neck Road, later abbreviated to Neck Road, and is now the Fort Hunt Road, so named when the Government located Fort Hunt at Sheridan Point during the Spanish-American War."

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